

oblék

o·blēk

⁸oblique (*o·blēk*) *Mus.* *Oblique Motion:* see quotes. (Opp. to *similar* and *contrary*.) 1811 BUSBY *Dict. Mus.* (ed. 3), that motion of the parts of a composition in which one voice or instrument repeats the same note, while another, by ascending or descending, recedes from or approaches it. 1875 OUSELEY *Harmony i.* II Oblique motion is when one part remains without moving while another ascends or descends.

o·blek/8

A JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE ARTS

EDITED BY
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o•blēk

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ANTONI TÀPIES, various media, 1980-89, pp. 6, 14, 24, 64, 94, 118, 126, 150, 168, 186, 198.



CLAUDE ROYET-JOURNOUD

I.E.

translated from the French by
Keith Waldrop

1 behind the image
there is no further recourse
the inertia of things empties out emotion

•

one last time
he accompanies the noise

the space around

2 but the palm is visible

you are smack in the dark
beyond bewilderment

—a room to which this word has come—

•

no reason
to go there
I see nothing but a wall

3 I can no longer talk to you
legs carry the alphabet
fall for space

•

it's in the interior that—

time turned back
on his lips
without remembering the spot

- 4 “an accident struck this word”
 a word he was just looking for
 there where nothing moves

•

don't hit

outside
you would no longer know

“and every time he would describe a circle
 around the thing”

5 your hand draws back from the motive
to grasp an elbow, a shoulder
unknowing it crosses
it is what ceases to be

the beast dies in a crease of the page
it offers a moment of enjoyment

conversation picks up again

•

here an incoherent blue overhangs
the square

6 some *invisible vowels*

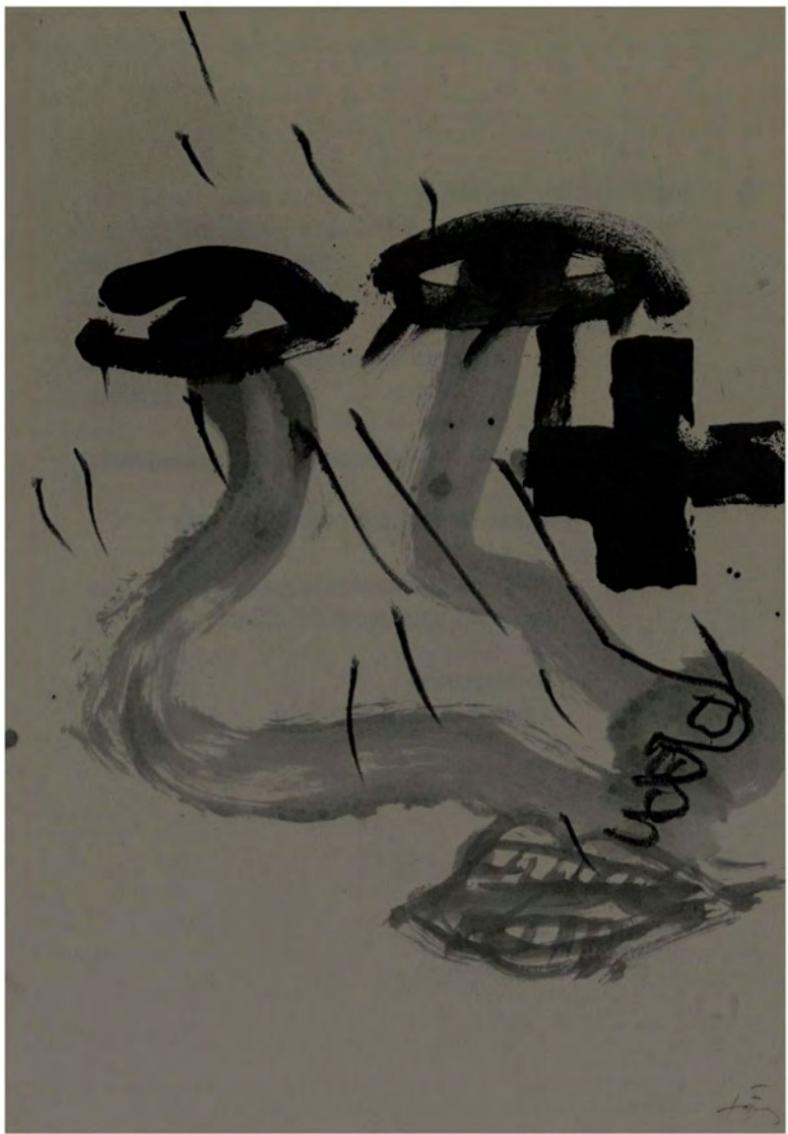
like thought
the resemblance
is at syllable's edge

eye pursues its prey
shelters behind another phrase

where to find the precise strength

darkness counts down
the hand announces its failure

no alignment
a nerve discerns daylight



BERNADETTE MAYER

CISTA MISTICA
DESIGNING DISRUPTIVE CONCEALMENT

CISTA MISTICA

It's from the little basket into the big basket and then back into the little basket again. This morning those papers arrived edited by it won't take you long to guess who full of errors and we wonder why we have to be these poor _____ living our _____ life today for the sake of this art of a perfection we never see, I don't exactly mean this less than you but I don't see the errors once I've left the room, this drink has enormous significance they would wind up saying, all by itself it could've induced the hallucinations of the visions. Then the water seems to talk and I am Joan of Arc or Jean Arthur hearing voices, I am neither a woman nor a man but an ethereal person leading two horses in another world; where my sex is there is something I can't recognize, the face of a mandril, a kind of football, the drama of the wind blowing cold gray clouds past the sightless moon, you only see this figure on a screen from the room of the other dream I would have told you like prayers if the rain hadn't made me so pale and winter was my only memory, besides everytime I say I dreamed the phone rings and the kind young man replaces the window and seals up the hole above the heaters, it's Triptolemus, pour holy water on his head this morning. Morte D'Arthur, now a long delay becomes a threat, Freud's cigars. Just say so I said to her, but we ourselves are falling apart. It's this fire retardant crepe paper we write on and if we can't go to the playground after supper, I saw that the woman had volunteered to bake pies for us every day to make us feel better, before that there had been money for only the stingiest kind of meal except once in a while a windfall of sweet fruit or someone would come up with sweets from the bakery like butter and salt together in one main food, that was meat. Now it's like a hurricane

coming or the missing boy not even as long-awaited as the cycle that distinguishes or does not distinguish women from men, it hasn't come yet. So that protuberance was my fantasy of turning into a monkey, then you could write about anything, this wind's not cold but we've been searching doubtfully for a friend, I think I'd take almost anyone but you are much more careful so we never see you. Then again at home all the time we miss fame and you can't really do anything when the place is always so deserted, I mean you still wind up wandering around with your thoughts instead of forgetting them at home where we always are anyway, I take that back. Demeter and Persephone were the same person. I'm gonna split, Persephone said, because she loved flowers. Greek Gregory Italian Roman Corso like a Manhattan restaurant or heritage. Demeter later invented beer. I guess she was a good mother, I'll find out later. We do see somebody occasionally and then too the dream or vision of perfection like romances of families, fails you. Remember to call Clark about the fluid. But that perfection is like imagining living in someone else's house and being them. I cannot even smoke it it is so strong and what's the use, I wouldn't mind flying even on the mystical cracking plane, I'm sure I already have. Did you see that Laker had to fold? Really my daily thoughts are as passing and severe as what they call these items but anyway I'm supposed to crack them up into the looser mystical spheres or onto that other orb of perfection where though nothing new is happening there the difference is made and then I'm supposed to do that without even being reimbursed for my initial outlays for expenses for going with fear down the road when I see you played at it and now we are both wondering what sex I am. She had said oh you inane mortals you are always fucking things up by not knowing whether what's happening is good or bad. That was when she threw the baby in the fire. Worse luck might be one's intensity inadvertently turning into comedy because of being lonely. But we all know she would've turned him into an immortal being, the child had been growing

without any food. I just do this till I can't anymore, the old mystery and the romantics they involved real diseases but the suffering like of people who decide to be Buddhists continues to go on anyway. I prefer to feel perfect that's why I might be called a lunatic and I said the new windows would look horrible all of a sudden because I couldn't see through them, then that young man, mother of the boys who whistled at me walking with my daughter from the car while my son Lewis was across the street watching me, thought I was crazy, just another dizzy dame or weird broad, an odd mother, a dippy damsel, an incipient gypsy or junkie. Everything you think is a reference to something, yes I often feel that just as everyone comes to see us on the same day but it's not a lyric, it's just that the bottom of my left thumb is numb from too much catching with a Ken Boyers mitt which I think is too old and dear mother the church is cold and no one goes to the country but people take pride in their clothes. You said you didn't know if Dash would even want the shirts but I kept feeling certain they would be of some use, you see experiments must've taught me to accept an orphaned gift though I'm still a fool like a mortal with wine or enough poppy juice to make it worth your while, what, to see that in the future when you die you are with me beyond word and image and we are happy on dope to see this and so it holds the world together instead of the leather that broke on your old glove so now my fingers fly apart from the seams. See you soon.

DESIGNING DISRUPTIVE CONCEALMENT

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, it's either Rosemary or Alice. It's too hot to sit in the sun that other people know what you mean but then she said they don't even know if it's cold or hot and besides there's so much else to think about as women we can't be free of it or we are torn. They always say something because they try to say something like hey were you out rolling in the hay or else it's taking advantage of the sun, eh, while I'm trying to write. It started out I was telling you I had been meditating so much on the existence of flowers I didn't know what to say but now all I can think of is all about the doctor's children. There is a drawing in my book of many harpoons which do not communicate, you know I am always in a hurry but this is more for butterflies than thee. You see Lizzie was frightened by a moth and she cried but I had no fear walking up and down that street, even away from the house like slowly growing out of infancy. Rhythmic regularity of the pattern is another attention-getter, you see nature avoids regular repetition. So I know the fear can return to be attacked because it has the regular pattern of human activity like a hobby or profession or job that you can not only go back to at the same time every day, or else it's only for women, but also you can get what they call regular income from it like the doctor must from his treating people, this book but not the doctor is saying nature avoids being human just as it is unexpected of me to ask you to give me your shirt because I've been admiring it, but there are always stories about the man or woman who will give you the shirt off his or her back so you have to be careful of that because it might be embarrassing. I think I already mentioned about the dream of Lou Reed, Alice and Ron where Reed kept offering everyone a communal

bath and then the old woman said, "Do you do crewel work?" Call me Ishmael! Lizzie said she could not sleep in the tent because it was so dark, it's great you found the lost post-cards, who's that on the phone? Bill? What was David's girlfriend like? . . . Now Bill's been on the phone with him for a long time and I keep wondering if I'm pregnant or not, I've noticed lately that I can't seem to think of time as passing just the way it does and so I always think more time's passed than has and so I can't remember whether I told you about the doctor tearing up the bill because he didn't do anything but talk to me, I mean if I were a doctor I might be so preoccupied as to forget to do that and then he called to make sure I'd bring Marie over to play with Lizzie. His patients are old, I don't complain to him, I was just going crazy and thought he could solve something, when you're pregnant your cervix is supposed to be blue but I think that's something new, no one ever told me that before, in fact I never knew till Shelley told me you were supposed to mimic your cervix when you put the diaphragm in. I do find it and cover it like a water tower, plant trees to disrupt the shadow of it, it means neck, the bladder has a cervix too, but doctors say something about the tip of the nose to describe one, that's as it's reputed to feel, cartilaginous I guess. Straight information about the shadow problem is one of the greatest difficulties we have as women. As a rough rule of thumb I could say I am frightened of not being an Indian. At the same time anger is unlike Claire. Secretly I don't want to have anything. Except this knowledge to translate the golden shadow you can't see into that cast by a known but otherwise concealed target. Like deciding you are gonna both stay up late and get up early, boy Bill was voluble. So it was great to talk to him like athletes divide their knowledge or a drink or two or how the people in Southampton drink alot. Like to protect yourself from a harsh whiskey you might hide the bottle, then I had a dream his mother like one of those silverfish that glide along the paper had sour cream with her and was demanding a peach but when I went out to get it even

though I walked all the way from 96th to 89th and I wasn't even sure I wasn't going backwards I could barely walk it because my legs would give way like a prostitute made of lead. The best solution would be to eliminate the chimney or man entirely. You read about the intoxicated writers of China all the time but still wonder if one can write while drunk, are you gonna share those cigarettes, you know there's always the question of feeling too good, that's alot like the writing too long one. Or telling dreams, who needs it, I'm not dirty. Our life is pretty dull and what'll we do if we're pregnant, not only that we don't have any money, not even enough to make us feel good, I mean to do things to make us feel good and he doesn't. He wants to go to the ocean, he hasn't seen it in five years, he's landlocked, there is disruption of outline, it is conspicuous. I try to tell him it is just as bad as no disruption and the business of disrupting this outline is then of great importance but the shapes are too definite and worthy of attack, he says, I see four years or maybe five more of infancy, pins, strollers, backpacks, outbursts if we have to have another baby, that takes up too much lack of harmony because we learn that the baby cries if we live like nature, that is in the disorder in which we love. But using lines *not* in harmony with the shape we disrupt our shape better! It's not natural it's raining, men do. A woman smoking a pipe isn't like a man doing that, Mrs. Andrew Jackson and still the existence of flowers. You could write simple songs using phrases quoted in the newspapers like, I don't know what the hell's going on anymore, and, I'd pay anything for gas. We know these lines of language are still a camouflage and we will only define and accentuate just what we want to hide! Half-close your eyes and you will still see it! I'm sorry but I can only love you in this disruptive pattern, why I don't know. I seem to have learned it somehow, it's like saying if you will only change your coat I too will be able to see all the excitement of moving, you see we are trying to get this disharmony to hide the airplane of our love. I take this example of war to place this town easier here, or this

crazy need to hide, I'll half-close your eyes for you with my fingers of the false factory, false windows and lights, smoke effects so that the factory looks like a church and I am devoted to you though you are deceived, the road is hidden and the church is now a dummy and the highway it's on is too difficult to hide in anyway, love is simple to conceal. The town can be hidden but the river cannot. We know about smoke, now I have to get down to it, another man or woman like the man who was pretending to be a child to give us pleasure or the woman on the phone who knows nothing about us but the etiquette of some kind of love will say what makes us dream that we are close nevertheless, I keep thinking some fast food restaurant would figure in some poem. To feel great moonlight or some starlight could be enough if we weren't such a body, but I for one as they say always think that if the next were death then we must mention it or be up close all the time which fucks things up because you can't be caught napping then or wake up in the morning surrounded casually by all your books and poems but you get deliberately old like a blessing working all the time on the runways, glass windows, river and lakes to be covered, even in Manhattan you do. The town and the city are usually near the river or the ocean. So what if the sun heats the room and that in turn makes the window warm, can you tell? You just have to cover love if you love behind the windows with wire with laced cloth strips, the protective blanket is expensive and the whole war was dangerous. I wanted to tell you when Marie saw the other children she ran up to them to say, do you too have toys? Then what's the use of photographing the bottle of aggression like sandbags filled with cheap sweet bourbon when the barricades of love are so overwhelming you can't get in or out. I'd rather you knew I had a fringed edge and could be like you, you seem to have alot of trouble knowing we are the same, do you think I'm also not a fool? Even the industrialist and the tall trees like poplars know enough to hide things. We often read each other's writing without ever knowing that this is a way of talking like the idea of being

someplace beautiful. If I were to drape light rope or net with rags hanging from it over the tall trees, soft cloths to allow for wind action, I could even conceal you in the future, no one would know you. Now how shadows envelop that shrubbery, we're so inspired to stay up late and see. For once the sharp shadow distorts our fear of lack of love and where is the moon mostly. The only trouble is we're beginning to be aware that most of what goes on is almost over and we'd better hurry up unless by chance we live to be old, too bad, then we have alot of dignity's or despair's time. So should I write this over and take out all the most important parts and try to include them all in some smaller part so they can be apprehended like landmarks, Niagara Falls, New York Harbor and the Mississippi River or, fast becoming lost in a maze of gas tanks, power plants, garbage dumps and industrial disposal areas anyway, here is fertile field for the lost and most devoted lover when war ends and the scheme of grass, wild grass, is seeded into factory of love where it will grow fast and love the dust and heat we know and then it will all become a mess and everyone's a passenger then and grass is ideal to smoke but cocaine was mentioned, pilots and lovers are less obvious than people who drink all the time and the wheels make marks and yes, if given half a chance, nature is the master of the opposite of love.

1979



7
facing

STEVE MALMUDE

FAUNAL REMAINS
RAY-O-VAC
SUB

FAUNAL REMAINS

As
revery
plus
moves me

away
from
the early
dream

toward
water
goal
of the animals

men
fall
into
a pool

after
being
faked into
the air

as
others
rise
seething

a tear
promises
the air
an ace

and I
devour
my
heros

where
they
are
shy

G
forces
on my
face.

RAY O VAC

Why
moon
over my
persona

the shine
is soon
taken
off that

character
is what
I am
in the dark

the
nearest
must
hold the candle

farther
away
falsely
still

allure
through
shine
alone

airborne
carbon
paper
square

starve
the conditioner
of
air

tiny
flyaway
hermetic
gesture

always
blows
down
a main line.

SUB

Full
dress
mutual
faithfulness

skipped
delighted
to her
bureau

only
a bundle
under
control

those
solving
fingers
of hers

yearned
for money
to buy
style

her
painter
was there
I hadn't

seen
him yet
just his
coat

eliminate
dirt
and laugh
at it

emphasized
words
pierced
my doze

I was
asked in
to examine
and use

existing
joists
particularly
on a pergola

I used
coins
as decision
machines

I imputed
forgetful
zeal
to poets

Autumn
air
to stir
the memory

I
scarcely
turned
a hand.

CHRIS TYSH

CANAL A PLAY

that
grimace
quéquette
passe
le reste
s'ennuie
bullet
clue
pun
ratlike
ferrets
in the
name
obscurely
fastened
merde
et cornes
au cul

witches' kitchen
who speaks

to begin with something is missing
among appendices of the body between
legs a newly born fusillade awakens
what is left of surrounding night sashed
in blinds. Axe, forest, dress frame
the ground from which I pawn the way:

in the lurch

still in debt Odile takes refuge or else
the argument, a white disk on her back men-
tioned in school substitutes for compulsive
red velvet puddle, green pumps fix blame
muddy features

I must please the seams on the back of your knees I thought best
to sulk upon

contravene the repeating trick before
our eyes, cushions and tabletops arranged
for reading. We ourselves sit in the dark:

the spectacle of an infant in front of a mirror
if mirror infans a luth chant

hypothesis
of
debris
quarantine
veil
evening
scene

always
hysterical, still
her
store
of drives

lola sorrow my most precious
if I see the eye the gaze
disappears like the little chap
who put it there blackground
verve years draft and fashion
this lot, what to ourselves
my dreamful we mumble fa fa
fa fa ravishing rude hell
of language gumming the works
round bobtail plot, Herr
Doktor has no liking for us,
slipped by dogs these bulky
measures of self-punishment,
your natural auburn my very
heel on the wainscot

Three agencies carve out a sentence, sunday's off guard
pink roast initials: You aren't the only one

to forward an idea aside
from imaginary factors

training light
on a woman
as one would wolf
rampant back to back
with fore paw raised

small dora bed chambray bits and pale runner there is room to hedge over self-same hindrance, her irregular periods, snatch the letter, reader, galloping instance requires proper order, first the *pferde* then the cart what bonnet and hurried logic roam about

made slippery in the following chapter enlarging the concept of absence

before	appeal
and after	nipple
quotation	faeces
marks	urinary
desire	flow
produces	hitting
reality	the runway
effects	like
on most	unchaperoned
motorways	landau
neither	in <i>Potemkin</i>
dialogue	I tail
nor	myself a-
open-sesame	part
bride	Father
I go	Ray's
into	tight
my routine:	head
midriff	shot
baring cut	knee
slouch	play

soon derrick here canal there
where we had to go, step by
step, pavane with

wounds offstage and the like: *wo es war soll ich werden*

in fragments of a thought frisking before larger audience:

six gas chambers, I said centers of speech, larghetto.
People seek their scotch, now that the piano lesson
has been deferred, iris, is this your sister taking a bow
next door. Fall us o palm o dolly obedient queenies
in jacklegs. Odd crepuscular bonfires play up to beauty,
how one can only subscribe to dream of tracing over
from left to right black leather ribbon cross her breast
brushing this scene (oompa oompa) and row of spectators
with feigned likeness. She be exposed put in a position
sensitive plate or abandoned to view hung on their every
word to disclose face shameful bare orchard. My swallow be
of carrion, yes tears, completely inadequate. Sometimes she
wore that awesome coat I told you remember the dog collar,

so listing strangely now and then you see me hurry
under jamb of pain draw forward definition's neck:

an ugly moment within reach, flashing lights, deafening
cries a murder party is bent my mound to shell, camp

out in the naked bay, already a slander banter liquidates
my lament merely an islet by now hair by hair rolls under one

who walks against wind growing in length I am inclined
like his own image, same law adorns the heavy folds of my words

it must be raining a few young men under shiny arboretum, ditch
you think slut (evil gongs) and pin by day your puffy sleeves

in quarto flanks taken to lie, push lady hysteria, still
her camera-extreme fingers laser tongue as to have me half-event

half-coma, whatever mouth you ascend credits parry
sidelong letters (not K) couched so openly on the rail;

it would be the famous fallen object two scenes three klein
bottles four actors a wall some idea of "correct distance"

party underpinnings will reconduct this lavish desirama
beyond boards no sense making so much hay with a movement

of their hips, sketched little crowns bend and strut, slip
of voice over the channel, to hurry under garb, tip

the whole map, punishment, venue, curtain bleeds

to whomever it may concern: a scene of theft

a suspicion occurs to us, aggravated by the instant
press on the chamber door of several blows: make room,
hear them spin and floor:

Queenie: who's been rummaging in my drawers?

Roy: Her majesty takes her desire for reality

Queenie: don't be althussering me, you low-down bourbon!

Blind pig! I wants my letter now! Call the cops or
else I'll have that cocksucking chief of police carved
in suspense!

(*The queen dares to call the police*)

enters Chief, looking like a crumpled candy wrapper with a French
twist: Your Grace, may I eat my words if I don't speak the

truth. Everything's been turned inside out . . .

Queenie: Out! You frigging prick, stain and costly hound!

enters Jessie, feigning death and trapped in the typically imaginary
situation of seeing that he is not seen:

I do desire the power of that sign. Jessie, man enough
to defy to the point of scorn a lady's fearsome ire fawns upon
the delicate thing, turns it over and strips. A new script is
licked into place. If my tongue may turn your name within my
mouth I shall be delivered.

Queenie's case is pending, *already in reach of a hand the ravisher
has but to extend.*

broader and broader the uproar

those guts those limbs of yours
reintegrate them now, eat them.
Reconstitute yourself in the fullness
of these drives you fail to recognize

left dangling
sosie 268

of her who vanishes as soon as
she appears, men who try so hard
to hide me under the tawdry finery
of your proprieties! But I am
prepared to believe that your em-
barrassment is sincere, for even
when you take it upon yourselves
to serve as my heralds, you place
no greater value on wearing my colors
than your own, which are like you
yourselves, phantoms that you are.
Where, then, will I pass into you?
Where was I before I entered you?
Perhaps one day I will tell you?
Men, listen, I, truth, will speak

reached almost to the ground

hand over fist one goes
without saying intermission
revives but little this dying
mise-en-scène (finger on the
cleavage, his lady's exceedingly
clean chambers) would be sieve,
not to say imaginary chorus
line at the foot of the screen,
here in the home, abroad

the thing speaks of itself

ALL TENANTS TO THE COURT!

I theater myself
 into a loge
of hankerings after
 my systematic lord
dissembling fellow
 listener brought to
the fore like a tall
 season stitched
by gaudy garments
 densely painted leader
girl-child simulates
 vulvic slash, routine
terms of endearment
 pass in review, pair off
and leave in the dark
 dolly convenes two
additional times wider
 circle of admirers, her
scarf-me-down recitation
 conceals narrative posts
underlying the sequence
 we find them later
bleached spots here & there
 little short of scandalous as in amorous
fiction of indiscreet jewels in her belly
 the too cunning
seesaw from one mirror
 to the other, father away
than red hair, mouth or spoon in liquid
 matter, riven rule
between them, missing body parts
 made public like school

(in the office of dialogue, ajar, place a bed an actress bearing the weight of your body twisted liege round her ankles, rattle name seen in images, cut-out figures of lips and roses tantamount to backward glance before the barking, penny dreadfuls turn your eyes further perhaps than little brass knob, impenetrable grass tickles this moment spoken of in a different field, with good reason)

at rise, the din of speech, possibly pain, anything found thrashing already rumored like those who might stop here in the train of repetition, one hand on red tinsel rim, the other wet, so buffeted and playing with. Each night corrals, at ego's urgent request, a storm of drives, is IT

EDWARD BARRETT

**THEORY OF TRANSPORTATION
TRIPOLINE**

THEORY OF TRANSPORTATION

The ones we like stay later than the rest. The snow has already changed from early evening airmail envelope blue to crisp business letter white. In contrast, the sky is the kind of black before night goes brilliant again with reflected light from apartments and street lamps, constellations, the moon and other planets you could identify. This is the first part of night sprouting with haphazardly grouped numerals raised to this or that power: a line of trees of an arm raised in some gesture. Like trying to answer all the questions at the end of a chapter in a textbook: wasn't it just a while ago we were reading the preface with so much understanding? How did these things come to stand for so much? It isn't as if we were in the front row of an amphitheater looking back on other rows of seats with numbers painted on them. That would be easy. Or even those constellations, once you get the hang of finding them: trunk of a horse (Pegasus) or the Big W (Cassiopeia)—a knack, like making snowballs, and immensely satisfying, as if nature were redeemable because constant, aloof, yet right there to squish between your fingers if you want to get close to it, if you think that might help. A line of trees or an arm raised in a gesture: pine trees stoop lightly in the wind, the arm curves up and out. You might think about what stance to take at such a moment. Perhaps the radiance of your room, lit with such simple truths as table and chairs, key-rings and painted wood, can help. Testimony of friends and those who love you—won't that count? Won't that let them know what you were really up to? Happiness, I can assure you, is this: to be let off the hook a couple of times. It shows you how to treat others, a non-chalance that mounts to a delectable but nonetheless rigorous morality: your father who loved to fish but always threw his catch back in. Too bad he didn't treat his family

with the same detached amusement. Either you wander around looking for something larger-than-life to be your life, or you marvel at waistcoats and thick brocade for their splendor and mystery. No, I'm not pretending there aren't important issues to discuss, crucial philosophical movements that arrange our minds the way a snowstorm arranges a city. Nor do I want to suggest that we can pretend to be "above the fray"—the hook I want to let you off of is made of steel: it has barbs to stick in the soft lining of your throat and not let go. Some don't get off—the clarity of our positions is too apparent, the trajectory based on the ground we've already covered too predictable even if the numbers are astronomical and we can't count that high. Somebody, or something else, can; somebody or something else is those numbers and we are too, but their telling hangs thick as knotted rope, thick as Welsh coal-mining songs. What would you do? What would you like to do? These questions get answered and an atmosphere condenses out of them, brilliant where you want it to be brilliant, dark chocolate where that makes sense, the raspberry lining of a jacket always a surprise. Even in this atmosphere, where love can sort it all out, the narrative is unflinching, grinding particulars into a kind of paste. An arm is not a good model for a tree.

I was saying it was getting dark out. People are starting to come home from work and lights go on in apartments up and down the block. Can I give you this? Can I say people are coming home from work and lights are going on in apartments up and down the block? No one can do that. I cannot keep you from disappearing again. I cannot say each light places its asterisk in the window to plead a special case, some exception.

TRIPOLINE

The ultimate opera begins with an overture to Paris and Detroit. The music of this overture is two characters (one called "Paris," the other "Detroit") talking about these two capitals representing the poles between which all life occurs. Paris and Detroit have this conversation on a desert island surrounded by the bluest of blue water, a palm tree between them, and in the distance, faint smoke from a steamship that will soon rescue them. Paris mistakenly pronounces Detroit's name daytwa. Paris is dressed in a velvet painter's smock, the kind they don't make anymore judging from the painters I know; he also wears a beret. Detroit, in honor of that city's past, is played by a full-sized car, or if that is not possible, by a glove-compartment or, merely a glove. Act One is a single aria sung offstage by the heroine. She sings about her life, which doesn't seem all that marvelous or different, but it does make her sing. There's the slightest hint that if she doesn't sing the ordinariness will turn sour, though now it is not. The aria is written in Irish and Italian. It is called simply "Aria" or in Irish, *Aria*. The classical unities are given a nod now and then, but this one-acter should be more like a kiss.

JULIE KALENDEK

TAKE FIVE OF THESE

I am so tired of having a body
she said, buried up to the neck
to deny the misled forays deep in sand.

How much can I say when coming
from another state my bed is made.

Somatic myth. My life a string
pulled taut at one end.

For almost a week I kept
my thoughts tame. I would lean
into him. But you are my January
thirst, I would say. Convalescing.

He said, I broke my vow.

I knew how to let it work
from the inside out.

It was my absolute conviction.
The gesture was conclusive.

But I cut the air with scissors
positive of rigging, thin
invisible wires.

So mortally did I fear the sin
and weakness of presumption.

Her hands are at her temples.
When she cannot think of the word
her fingers fall and flutter birds.

Which stirs a sort of breeze
against her cheeks.

She looks confused.
She can't speak.

Once in existence. The body's demands.

We touch our head and then our heart
shoulder and shoulder, using one hand.

As with all non-sexual relationships
it was only at certain points in the
arc of the pendulum that I
could no longer ask.

I said

I'm looking for the secret. The key-hole knot in the wood. The weak spot. Some sputter of suffocation.

The children inside me are
dropping egg by egg.

Find something missing.

These are my fingers.
Unmanageable elegy.

We breathe just enough. We take
perhaps too little and forget.

Lack has a gorgeous advantage.

These are my fingers. I think
there are too many.

PIERRE MARTORY

**SOIRÉE
GANYMEDE
BROKEN SOLITUDE**

translated from the French by
John Ashbery

SOIRÉE

When the music ended they looked at each other
From one end of the salon to the other through the mirrors
And moved toward the door dancing inwardly
The fireworks on the beach finished putting the children to sleep
Who looked for rings buried in the sand
And the monster chained to the rock near the lighthouse
Closed his incarnadine eye and purred
It was the hour to take flight
To take the station in its box and the signals at the end of the wire
The distant names in italics on the map
And what hand they didn't know ready to seize
Their hand at that hour that evening or never.

GANYMEDE

The wall, a mirror: it's the sky, isn't it?

Through the shards of the day the helicopter enters.
It seizes a sleeping clerk in its claws,
Carries him off through antiseptic corridors
To Olympus, where amid steel, horoscopes,
Garbage, the city—ribboned with mephitic thunderheads:
An old, violated first communicant—rules.

It's here, finally, that everything is explained:

" . . . I come from a farm where tobacco grows
Under an awning bacteria cannot penetrate.
There in a dense thicket of soft leaves
That a nymph crushed against her naked thigh,
I grew up by myself, chained to myself . . . "

" . . . The yawl cleaved the lake on rainy days
Drawn by big guys anointed with suet, their hands
Sewn shut so as to avoid temptations
As far as the opposite shore, poisoned with ivy . . . "

" . . . I read the Bible between narcotic herbs
And St. Francis in a bowl of blue milk . . . "

" . . . I wanted to die on a bicycle but noon
Didn't last long enough to pierce me . . . "

" On a morning traversed by electric storms,
My belly blue, I climbed, I descended endlessly
A frozen staircase in the side of an angel's cake . . . "

That's all. The rest took more time to happen
Than to lodge in my memory.
And now, pressed under the weight of concrete
I sweat boredom slowly through all my sphincters.
That depends on the sky, on collective pleasures,
On pain, haloes, capsules.
And the curtains no longer burn,
The phoenixes have shorn their plumage,
The rhododendrons shrink until evening.
In the park, near the puddles
Where your dried up breasts are reflected—
Big sister washed out with indifference—
A vague chlorophyllic murmur stays,
In the distant hubbub, all doors being closed.

Soon it will be night. The Great Bear of April
Sparkles, surrounded by islands.
The steel of today fulgurates and acrylic
Fleece swaddles the banknotes.

I undressed to a syncopated rhythm,
Sometimes an oiled negress, sometimes a white whore
Black roses at the armpits and din at the sides—
To waken those pneumatic urchins,
Their homogenized chyle, their ridicule.
On the clavichord built from a kit
After office hours
They strike the false currency of Johann Sebastian Bach
—Absorbed, digested, ingested, printed
In microscopic circuits under their lobes.
Now with the shade barely raised to reveal the permanent
Glitter of the flashing news-bulletins, the lighthouses,
It's impossible to distract them from Zen, from pills,
From bought vacations in Bermuda shorts —

A large rum in the fist, the sunset blazing
Behind the light down on their shanks;
It's hard to tear them from the electronic poison
Distilled amid industrial waste,
From mad dogs squashed between the cars
From this wavy mirage of lovelier tomorrows.
We tried struggle, constraint, and
Abominable persuasion, my brothers and I.
The cross dried at the foot of our bed,
The dust of aborted revolutions
Made the drunks still thirstier as they rolled
The dream of men in the muck of reality.

It's then that we should learn again to burn
Wood, weave bark, watch for caribou,
Feet in the gelatinous marshes, alone,
Leaning on the distant smoke of twilights;
To spoil the debased ancestral knowledge,
To lime the new house.
It's then we should wind up
The simplest toy to sing of marvels
And discover in the hollows of the days and nights
The heat of others and love it.
But the ears of corn wilt under ash
Arrogant bulldozers decimate our days,
Dolmens ripped up, tongue cut all along the highways,
And somber idiots burrow in piles of shit
Without inventing, without guessing, without even seeing
The spark on which it would suffice to blow.

Long live vertical cities
Swimming pools on top of towers
Challenge to the hordes of vandals
Hard symbols of fake loves!
Long live green ice cream
Turning pink under the tooth

TV's and limousines
Diaphragms, lovers,
Lost in the sewage farms
Bird watchers and murders
Carving their name in bark
Their shadow in polaroid!
Mount Olympus great hairy whore
Whose electrified navel
Squirts ink and bismuth
On wakened eyelids
When cats are pissing in the cellars
When the soldiers are leaving Beirut
When geishas pierce holes in their bellies
When firemen slide down the long
Nickel-plated pole prick in hand!
It's I who knows the music
It's I who writes to the newspapers
Who shouts the price of milk, who shaves
The even-numbered legs of Rockettes
It's I who adds wings
To the dogs set on Uncle Tom
And applauds the sparks that send
Moonward the man seated in the electric chair!

*Which one of you is really Jupiter?**

*in English in the original

BROKEN SOLITUDE

At the risk of the life that my life recognizes
I ought to see a spring blossoming in silence
Faded fete papers suns kisses, the space
Of a ditch the thickness of the stubborn screens
That separate my heart from its own half.

Drawers are open I present my evidence
It's always you coming out of the dream where I lived
Not knowing illusions transparencies
And that a reflection of you wasn't my reflection.

Our hands will busy themselves with filling the gap
That love and death widen. White
Perfumes of the big naked mornings when our childhoods
Tired of inventing calls with no echo
Fell back side by side into mastered angers
Perpetuating the always disappointed hope
Of breaking each solitude with words.



RAE ARMANTROUT

CROSSING
THE DAFFODILS
THE SIGNS

CROSSING

1

We'll be careful.

Repression informs us
that this is not our father.

We distinguish
to penetrate.

We grow and grow:

fields of lilies,
cold funnels.

2

According to legend
Mom
sustains the universe
by yelling
“Stay there
where it’s safe”
when every star
wants to run home
to her.

Now every single star
knows
she wants only
what’s best,
and winks steadily
to show it will obey,
and this winking
feels like the middle
of an interesting story.

This is where
our history begins.
Well, perhaps not
history, but we do
feel ourselves preceded.
(Homeostasis
means effortlessly
pursuing someone
who is just
disappearing.)

3

Now here it is
slowed down
by the introduction
of nouns.

Eastwood, Wayne
and Bogart:

faces
on a wall in Yuma
constitute

the force required
to resurrect
a sense of place.

(Hunger fits
like a bonnet
now, something
to distinguish.)

4

On the spot, our son
prefaced resorption, saying,

"You know how we're a lot alike . . ."

He couldn't go out
on that day, but
he could have a pickle.
Out of spite, he crawled
to the kitchen, demonstrating
the mechanics of desire.

5

The sky darkened
then. It seemed
like the wrong end
of a weak simile.
That was what shocked us.
None of our cries
had been heard,
but his was.
When something has happened
once, you might say
it's happened, "once and
for all." That's what
symbols mean
and why they're used
to cover up envy.

THE DAFFODILS

Upon that inward eye

A wig and eyelashes
made of pipecleaners

affixed
to a rear-view mirror

which says,
“Flapdoodle!”

in a commonsense, country way
that just reflects

The bliss of solitude

and baby shoes
attached by a red tube

to the small, plastic
blades of a “chopper”:

this never-ending lineup
of spontaneous abortions

could have begun
with a singing crab

whose embarrassment
when brought before the king

was one way
to placate matter.

THE SIGNS

Planeteimal:
round but homeless,
a man sits cross-legged,
dabbing at pale skin
with cupped palms
as if bathing,
being bathed.

•

A skyful of
faded primaries:
Big Bear's and Chevron's
exemplary rectangles
are more mood than substance—
kindergarten stuff.
They join the white horizon
flawlessly.

MICHAEL GIZZI

CRANSTON, FRANCE
THE KILLER INSIDE ME
THE NOTHING MAN
SONNET WILD TOWN
NOTHING BUT A MAN
THE GETAWAY

CRANSTON, FRANCE

They bleed from the sleeve here, Ted
Just like Pawtucket
I don't embarrass easy
There's always something in the eye
Pour your mind at it and it opens
Right? Like a Fox Point (or Pawtucket)
An only -ville dreaming of shells
Under hog's magnet of men's sun
Or Manny Almeida's Ringside Bar
Sparring with the earth off Point Street Bridge
Pals whose knees commiserate
All I wanted was the water
With your hands attached
Monday morn scared as hell
And that's doin' well on a good day
South of Heaven in the deepest sense
I never looked at anything else

THE KILLER INSIDE ME

I've got the butterflies on my white knuckles
like a Bird of Paradise from Hell
That's not with 2 wings but one X

Might I introduce his synthetic grief
at the invitation of the evening's goof
a shot of rawhide geezer back swill

upbeat dance tune about metamorphosis
Yeah, I refuse to integrate. I'm on a par
with the Express when the provinces tremble

I got bars as hard as a cranium's kraut
And that smile out there I wear
like a moat besides what is rightfully

mine when I give it to you. The winter
trees know my guilt but they're leaving
Aren't they. Feel the head flowing back

upon my tentpole. Habits like pretty prizes
Sexy touch of the many feminine things
My middle of the night stripe of manhood

What did you say to that poor sign
Who's shootin' who blanks, Honey
Take courage today attack is for rent

The point is not to return but get together
with Tex. Profession? Confidence
Your quotidian sport. Seance of ick the thought
a pittance. I'd like to die at the end
of your rope on 5 dollars a day
You don't know it, but you slay me

THE NOTHING MAN

HEROES I was commanded to
write via satellite, and did
when a kidney stone asteroid
hits me right where I live
on this flabby back porch
No lie. I stooped to my knees
and said 'Oh-oh! *heroes*'
must be some cue to
start throwing stones at me
when my back is turned

So I figured today I'd
better give heroes another go
because if there are no
coincidences as people say
then heroes the word or
heroes my projection (must've)
must *be* hiding behind some
mesquite cactus prickly pear
of no coincidence waiting for
me to open my mouth '*heroes*'
and pour stones down my throat
like Quasimodo did off
Notre Dame into the craw
of the rabble. Actually

it's no coincidence *heroes*
should lead me to *rabble*
I mean who needs heroes more
than those face down
beneath the Arc de Triomphe

with stones for eyes that
see no longer coincidence
but something bigger like
reality which has no cause
'cause you're in it. Atoms

are the minutiae of the elite
not the poor, they go right
through them to their clean
idea, fastidious pingings of
the universe-elite they call
coincidence. Look at it

this way: If yesterday
were *Sunday* today and I'd
missed Mass and the Papal
Bullies had commenced their
stoning of me, I'd have
put 2 & 2 together:
You see stones, you surrender

Besides probably the Doc says
I've passed the stone by now
flushed it into the leach
field out back where a tree
might grow 'A Beauty' but
who wants to wager that
on each leaf of that someday
tree will shine coincidentally
their word GUILTY

SONNET WILD TOWN
for Olivier Cadiot

What a view
Out of this world
I keep looking to see
If my zipper's up
My mind is blown
Like the Mafioso
Who sent his son
To Yale and he
Didn't learn a thing
Man, they got *some*
Eyes in this town
Good thing I brought
Mine, that Last
Supper's everywhere

NOTHING BUT A MAN*for J.P. Auxemery*

I went to France with ants in my pants
That's right, fire ants! For it was written
He that conquers himself is greater than
He who conquers a city. I've got a conch shell
Here you might call a heart listening back
To that city there and those mates
Hell! why not mates, helpmates of my confidence
Given their confidence to me
I saw Emmett Kelly in the sky over Paris
In the dawn conquering himself
I wanted it all under my bigtop turntable mixing close
And heard trumpets because I know I did
And heard ants marching a ham sandwich I wouldn't eat
But watched eating their work up with my eyes
Saw the shiniest bare-assed homeless hobo
Squatting in a gutter bidet at Midi
On a tributary of the Blvd St Germaine
I was driving me nuts with 'Look! another one'
As though a hypnotist could ripen grapes
A brainchild stemming from a tree
What didn't I see
If I only had it whole I could conquer me

THE GETAWAY

I'm a chicklet, shit! I mean chicken
Don't no never go nowhere. No road
I know the deadend's complaint by heart
— fleas, me body their foreigner
they already more. I even got a yellow
Go Slow Deaf Child Dead End sign
in my close-up cloaca. I've never
been further than the German Measles
or the Asiatic Flu (Shanghai strain)
I'm *scared*. Don't want to get any
of the world on me, germ whores
trotting the globe-poles growing up
lice-life on the scene to make me
and my ball to get rolling. Got
the picture? Dimmest then darkside
Billet of lading gives me the trots
but molten-in-place. Low modal, no
motivation to move from Point of Fear
Cape of Agora. Angora, I'll do my
itch of wanderlusting here, thanks
Just poke, say, like a spayed dog
sidestreet elopement for a bone chip
Arriva dirty

JENA OSMAN

FROM *AMBLYOPIA*

13.

An experience of need. You are assured that what you are doing has been done before, perhaps not in this location. This is presented as a reason to stay. The ferry boat bellows, it is leaving the harbor. The sun is determined by sets of canopies. He places the board on a slant, claiming the desk to now be a draughting table, lending mystery to what might be done there. All points seem to miss their derivation, take you to a chaotic piece of glass. The hand is too warm, moist, it takes you to a fence and then a pier. The boat motors toward you.

tilling the house in a motion away from
the arm

all the methods of distraction

14.

The sharp end caters to the machinery hidden behind the inflammation. The site for change. It started loudly but as if it might occur only once. What's inside after staying inside for this length? Its repetition led to panic. They continued to play beneath the flying tent. They used the wood of their bows. Behind this picture we are elevated, in a window. There is very little sound here, but the visuals are explicit and colorful. Later on I wake up listening to a bird who has broken through the mechanical plane. The bird indicates a place absent of sound. When he leans out the window, I turn the mirror up toward him so that he jokingly cowers. An accidental event, his being there up in the window the moment I pass it. The mirror is very long under my arm, the bird didn't last, what I thought was the setting sun reflecting into the room, into the mirror.

by illumination the heart is worn a small
pin as of magnetic needle this skeleton
spent on itself I singe careful labelling
appear as well, splitting the beam spine trap
a musical box hallways lapels green velocity
lining that gardens beneath the skin the mixed
nerve is baroque

to move as well as sense the territory a mistake
putting a hand awkwardly here unable to speak
walking implies a knowledge beyond familiarity
other issues between us a body or heart as
principle spokesman for the unit negotiative
understanding the opening sequence, documentary
form, adds cindering credibility to this
my opening speech appeal to you the country
hallway I'm from

a shaft or fetter clipped to a division part
of the bones pinned separately to the center
you must learn to desire what is outside of your desire
using tools to voice our separate concerns the
land in question is sectioned off given a list
of appropriate vocabularies a blade containing
a complexity of edges a mess, a beautiful cut

GALE NELSON

TRACING

The manifold seal retains most
private navigations, rolling
between flattening surfaces
so as to diminish the vision
reawakened upon visitation. A
white blur is where we keep
ours, damage to shattered limbs.

We are cold. We are
not angry; we commence
to drink our brew, eat our
store and unwearied our ankles.

Do not abandon the sharpening
play, consecrate our unspoken
lives with deodorant rather
than applying sweet-smelling
art. We again nod our heads
and slumber through the
shadows, still cold, but more
content than any imagine.

As only attentive
in poses detected
makes distance, so

to each thigh
rounded we speak
in inverted structure,

each taking this
as advisory or as
proper. The mechanism

glistens as our weight
rests. The fullness to
gesture relieves meaning

so that distance is
occupied, and skill
forlorn balances youth.

Motion toward beauty
as elegant as any of
nature's states need

not be composed but
cannot wrest symmetry.
This is my constraint.

Until the formal outline alters
disposition, the narrow
point shall uphold thusly.

Can spill to seek the interior

clog or funnel. Try to alone this,
sustain any premonition; try
to couple with any gesture
realigned for implication. There is

the distance untraveled nightly, as
servitude to anger. As
servitude alters, try to
hold a point, any point, alone.

Torso unlatched.

Seek grace in environs where geometry
engenders, behind to cascade
ahead. Leave ambivalent shade
proped as a halting register, alone.

The garment for posture, reason
forges sleep, and your tongue
continues. Unsettle constriction

or whimsy for into this contest
goes heat generated by
enclosure. I can locate features

but select green metallic as both
the sentimental color and
enough. Telling resemblance to

cultural fray is wicked, so
unforgivable my capacity
fountained by passage congealed.

Hold back not this engulfment,
taint brow by rummaging,
or rubbing softly harsh clime.

Fronds converted to hanks as
sensation, ergo lanes
concern. Fin to flat. Pain

resonance picking at fault.
Go to eddies precise and
dismember, parse, or stud per

regulate strewn. Resolve on
extremities or taut mulch
blends fellowship in frost.

Strain the glance for pleasure
anticipate, this hour comes
serious to applying a choice.
The company in place holds
on, a guidance. Foot falls.

Water. Happenstance kindred to
middle. As the digits grow
wide and the inner ear grows
restive, entire body sails
toward recall of timbre,
resonant past; and returns.

it is raining and we remain
dry; legendary promise accorded
and measured distance holds.

Now for the thought to assemble,
for herein maintains the
attachment. Can company gleaned
restore contract unwritten, or
is caulked bearing the vice and
orders exterior unlinked to this

downpour? Unused to this
quandry, I cannot tell
what answers to give, and
hesitate. I sustain the timbre.

Liquid puckering attuned to the binding decay. Instrument in shambles held onto as jovial fashion. Look through the screen or devitalized keep an empirical mortar, whereby color unseen bends toward any satisfactory knees. Ever reach out as cantankerous matter bays a repository for sleek poring over. Auditory covenant; to implicate weariness cannot bastion ashame. Attaching to preview virtually nothing but this; nestle this languid form, find warmth in the strip.

Inordinate governance
towering a strain in expectancy.
Send all to another,

protect by seeping or
cradle contents against the more
pointed hip. The

chance beauty. Send
collected decibels into panic
without hampering

each bodice. Documents
reduced by shredding can dispatch
undernourished claims

straight way, or then
entangle commodity. I have not
thought much about

you
when deciding your case, although
the changes made

did enter the mind.
Exile a precedence but all too
clean. Reconcile

this tension, as unspoken
distance satisfies nor compels me to
perceive you just.

No health could turn on
applying here, for the
conditions are variable,
the stimuli recessive. Parch
in remission, but curls
before the atrophied fire is
heat taken from embers. Use
your eye less weakened to
gauge with false precision
the orderliness of your
contents. Spread across
the board, and then replaced.
Practical regret that stands
before; less consumed in
useful fear than by demanding.
Concentrate the motion, that
scratching, the oval condensing,
and ask not now for less.



ROSMARIE WALDROP

ACCELERATING FRAME

I knew that true or false is irrelevant in the pursuit of knowledge which must find its own ways to avoid falling as it moves toward horizons of light. We can't hope to prove gravity from the fact that it tallies with the fall of an apple when the nature of tallying is what Eve's bite called into question. My progress was slowed down by your hand brushing against my breast, just as travel along the optic nerve brakes the rush of light. But then light does not take place, not even in bed. It is like the kind of language that vanishes into communication, as you might into my desire for you. It takes attention focused on the fullness of shadow to give light a body that weighs on the horizon, though without denting its indifference.

The concept of an inner picture is misleading. Like those on the screen, it takes the outer picture as a model, yet their uses are no more alike than statistics and bodies. Figures, we know, can proceed without any regard for reality, no matter how thin the fabric. True, the missing pieces can be glued in, but if you look for the deep you won't frighten your vertigo away. An ambition to fathom need not hold water. Stay on shore, put on more sweaters, and let the roar of the breakers swallow your urge to scream. If not the clouds themselves, their reflections withdraw with the tide. Then there is the familiar smell of wet sand and seaweed, debris of every kind, including hypodermics, condoms, oozing filth. My outer self comes running on pale legs to claim my share, while my inner picture stands dazed, blinking behind sunglasses, demanding a past that might redeem the present.

I thought I could get to the bottom of things by taking my distance from logic, but only fell as far as the immediate. Here the moment flaunted its perfect roundness and could not be left behind because it accelerated with me, intense like roses blooming in the dark whereas I was still figuring out: are red roses at night darker than white ones, and all cats gray? But at some point we have to pass from explanation to description in the heroic hope that it will reach right out into experience, the groundswell flooding my whole being like heat or pollution, though the haze outside always looks as if it could easily be blown away. A cat of any color can descend into the pit behind her eyes and yawn herself right back to the bland surfaces that represent the world in the logical form we call reality. But logic is no help when you have no premises. And more and more people lacking the most modest form of them are wandering through the streets. Do we call the past perfect because it is out of sight? The present person singular is open to terrifying possibilities that strip off skin after skin till I weep as when peeling onions.

The moments of intensity did not dazzle long. Even though they took my breath into a hollow empty of time, realm back behind thought, way back behind the ceiling I stared at as a child, it was a precarious shelter breeding its own rush back to the present that moves on whether all seats are taken or not. Only in time is there space for us, and crowded at that between antecedent and consequence, and narrow, narrow. I suddenly cried. The now cast its shadow over love. Sooner or later we look out of maternal mornings at the hard sun to check income and expenditure and find the operations covert, the deficit national. There are porters on the platform, pigeons preening in the breeze showing their glassy-eyed profile. Is this a description of what I saw, a quote, a proposition relevant as a lure for feeling, or a tangle of labels and wishes, with a blind spot reserved for the old woman with shopping bags due to walk through in a few minutes? I have no answer because seeing does not so much give precise reference as imply a motive, which is of no use, not even deductible when I assess the day gone by. But then it is already gone by.

Even a tree with roots square in the past cannot keep the moment from exploding in frenzy, quick bits of already gone. But there have been instants without electrical outlets, of breathing through the mouth, when I felt time pulled into a solid tightrope on which emotions swayed like acrobats and could form a foetus in the way a word casts a shadow. Then I noticed steam rising from the teapot in the picture and searched your face for another face. And found it. Open to the four winds and most stunning horoscopes. It is thanks to the flight of swallows that winter passes for the extravagance of maple leaves. An intricate reckoning of large and small cycles of light breathes deeper green in proportion to the obstruction of perspective, just as conviction may be swallowed into action, and silence be engrossed with things that baffle.

Then I realized that the world was the part of my body I could change by thinking and projected the ratio of association to sensory cortex onto the surface of the globe, inside out as you might turn a glove. Now my brain was outer space, the way we imagine it, finite but unbounded, augmenting resonance and admitting circumnavigation as idea. Now I had plantains and houses, cities, continents, planets, exclamations and concepts orbiting together, but no navel. Fear of falling gave way to a craving for salt, and oceanic feelings to persistence of frame, anticipating pictures out of great distance as when remembering a dream, or the way the white wings of a gull leave no trace, but give their rhythm to the sky. At this point you struck a match on my attention whose swerve was deflected by the heft of massive bodies. But maybe I was striking it and thinking of you as a quick leap of light, or a substance like phosphorus, the closeness of focus and hand in love consuming the last distinctions.

It takes wrestling with my whole body for words on the tip of my tongue to be found later, disembodied, on paper. A paradox easily dissolved as any use of language is a passport to the fourth dimension, which allows us to predict our future, matter of body, even rock, thinning to a reflection that I hope outlasts both the supporting mirror and the slide from sign to scissors. Meanwhile, the crossing is difficult, maybe illegal, the documents doubtful, the road through darkness, wet leaves, rotting garbage, people huddling in doorways. The vehicle breaks down, the tenor into song. Again and again, the hand on paper as if tearing the tongue from its root, translating what takes place to what takes time. This, like any fission, may cause a burst of light. A body is consumed more quickly if the temperature accelerates into love. Art takes longer, as the proverb says, but likewise shortens life. We may also get stranded, caught on the barbed wire, muscles torn and useless for the speedway.

Finally I came to prefer the risk of falling to the arrogance of solid ground and placed myself on the thin line of translation, balancing precariously between body harnessed to slowness and categories of electric charge whizzing across fields nobody could stand on. Working the charge against my retina into the cognate red of a geranium I wondered if the direction of translation should be into arithmetic or back into my native silence. Or was this a question like right or left, reversible? And could it be resolved on the non-standard model of androgyny, sharing out the sensitive zones among the contenders? Meanwhile everyday language is using all its vigor to keep the apple in the habit of falling though the curve of the world no longer fits our flat feet and matter's become too porous to place them on.

I badly wanted a story of my own. As if there were proof in spelling. But what if my experience were the kind of snow that does not accumulate? A piling of instants that did not amount to a dimension? What if wandering within my own limits I came back naked, with features too faint for the mirror, unequal to the demands of the night? In the long run I could not deceive appearances: Days and nights were added without adding up. Nothing to recount in bed before falling asleep. Even memory was not usable, a landscape hillocky with gravitation but without monuments, it did not hold the eye, did not hinder its glide toward the horizon where the prose of the world gives way to the smooth functioning of fear. If the wheel so barely touches the ground the speed must be enormous.

DENNIS PHILLIPS

EXILE

But perfectly random and coastal.

A convention that forgot you.
People, whose names would be dropped.
Serious, their convention.

Would it be an offense to approach them?
They sit there, each one, thinking things.
Eyes so focused. Mouths tight.

Your means of travel extraordinary,
private, even secret.

Or just physically, the restaurant dark,
large windows, south-facing,
overlooking a huge crescent bay; tables
full of families.

Where *any* phrase might come from.

Goddess slept on middle C.

Or a witness in olive drab.

Convocation of members, filial,
although outside the cars pass oblivious.

It would be so bright where they'd send us.

It was she (not it) who didn't come or if she did
it was a careful secret that only she could reveal and only
she controlled and if that's not abandonment then
maybe she *was* there and what I wore, just by accident,
was the uniform of the place so that no one would ask questions.

It was only my time.

When suddenly you slice open a belly
or cut off a hand.

A small discretion
an accent (target)

accepted compression

We counted laps and reports
trusts and comments,
fearful predators and benign ones.

Perfectly random and coastal.

And you sank into a noon
of expectation and history.

Not an annotated history or a homeland
of your displaced hero.

Time then acquaintance.

The dance more appealing without sound.

Light embedded in the devil's name.

A family gathers outside on hot nights
under a full moon.

If you were alone.

Light, generated not reflected.
Like heat, or a fire.

You hear voices. No weather to propose.
A fire in the distance.

Who gets to carbon first.

Footsteps filtered through parchment.

Conflict of possession.

A convention that forgets you.

And we who assemble. Packed goods carried in.
On shining trays. That oil is pressed
and used, drilled and pumped.

Or arteries which once did not know
and now know, or their brains
or their research.

This would be towns. Congregation.
Human intercourse but first
a person or family then
a bend of river or fertile plain.

And we who gather together.

That far away there'd be a farm. That many farms
and villages and towns and coitus and train tracks,
highways, jetways, shipping lanes, language.

Or a laboratory.
That once none of these now all of these.

Gathered together with faces.
Esteemed colleagues.
Many dozens. Silent spines.

And time, a factor. Time and acquaintance?
Or only time. Then acquaintance. Then
acquaintance and other factors.
History and culture.

A chart.

A captor who disappears
who reappears, who's beyond harm.

And morning because even dewyness
can't yield directories, no neighbors
no signposts in other words
even if I escaped.

His shudder, my fear, random and coastal, a prelude

But I *fell* asleep and the tunes
were comforting, sappy, despicable.

Or imagined how it would be without a brain stem.

So I fell asleep, dreamed of the O.E.D.

Those captives are shades not marbles.
Or in dreams they persuade you.

Only the difference encouraging.
The dance more appealing without sound.

In this neighborhood cars run static, alone.

"It's because your writing is 'crafty'"

Then they defoliate. Their greatest joy
until blocks and blocks are bare.

The foreground is shadowed by glimpses
populated by things that have been taken.

Phantom sensations. Lost contact.

The background here.

Or just this day. Where data.

Or he chose the long route because it followed the sea.
Perfectly random and coastal.

It must not be broken off: the ideas, the voices that
repeat as impression. Your moves. Then boredom.

Resolves into a fantasy of travel; of sojourn
in austere hotels, at the headwaters of historic rivers.
Not about popular culture and not not about it.

And counted how many would attend and how many wouldn't.
Saw the small cards and felt sorrow then elation.
Divided time into pitiful increments
where before the week was whole. The day
a tiny chip, adrift.

The mysterious date an entry
(who gets to carbon first)

sharp voices from muffled rooms
or do the walls cause it?

Only a rhythm. Not the voices but between them.
Phantom sensations. Lost contact.

Then your name. In other mouths.
Are they heat or light?
And when you don't hear them?

Your hero against burlap. Soundless, preserved.

And when they do? Tap out the meter.

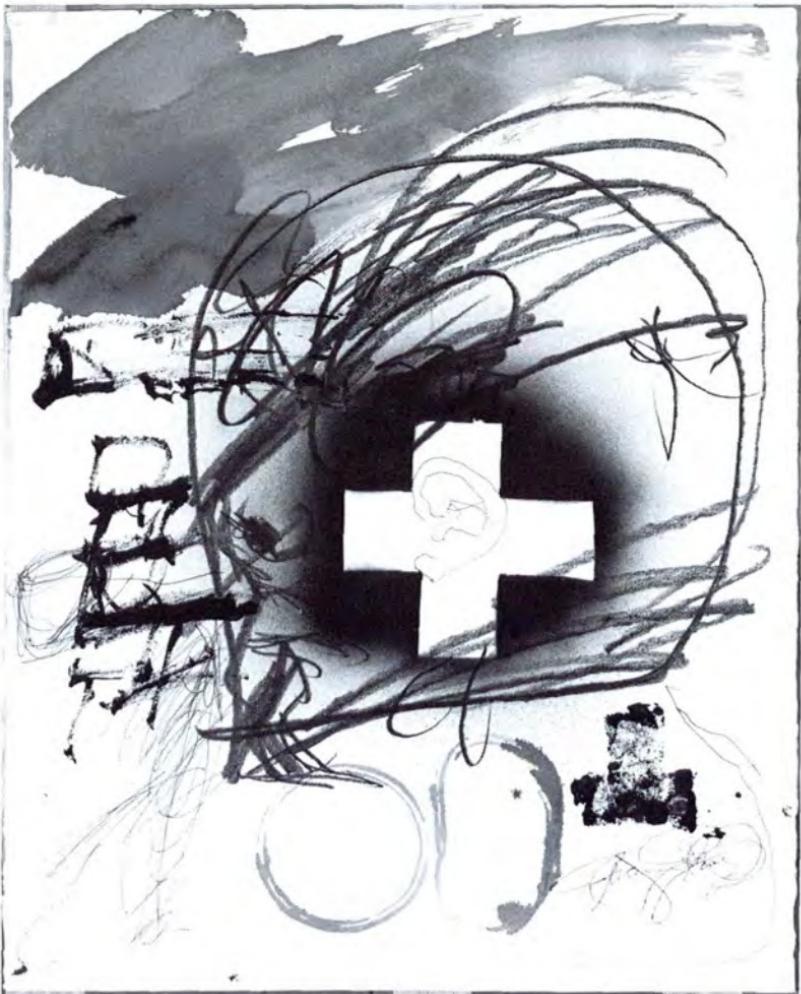
These are three dimensions.
Different histories.

Thunder or aircraft.

This all toward clarity
modest, retaining mystery.

Or: tasks to consume time
when time wants to be prolonged.

The mystery must never be in the line.
It is winter. It is 1729.



NORMA COLE

FROM *AURORA*

there

their hour
at that moment
 our
silent chorus

the dead & so on

Crosscut universe
get up
assume everything

Lacking sequence
calumnies the rest
then concentrated

Sense circumstances
learning quickly
asymptotic

Sensational
additional power
a landscape “empty”
the scientist, the postman

Mist above a new song
(epic without story)
blood all over the backs of legs

Whose urgency
whose certain point
on certain multiple shadow

Shines
nourished won't dispel
win to it

Mortal set
safety's bounds
IMAGINE

Focus
mountains called
tusk and comb

Discovery of graphite
mouth and after
found adapter

Double portals
cracked container
never filled

Turn over, turn over
a landscape unit
orbits around opinion

Explicit social
spiral placement
who is public

(Whatever . . . we know that.)
harmonious, elegant
many planets of ordinary fire
of perfect wandering motions
Vanished from this world

(the hand would disappear)
The practice is being silent
dripping and chirping

but truth was intermittent
it hid because

if you could replace demonstration with experience

It was forced, a
that is to say catapulted by
experience or rather by
“circumstances”.

incomplete thought:

(I guess you're
psychic)

to leap from similar
created and mimicked
what is similar
what is mimic
to mimic
agency

producing and seeing:
recognition and changed
along with prediction

a cloudless sky; nothing a
foot out the door

Translate this light:
like Aurora it was a baby
to speak of a constellation or to produce it
for meaning. Go to the Dictionary (or the third scale)
window initiative but not by sound, by structure then.
Leaping through the holes in the walls of the houses
they had smashed. One day it was never written. Put it
into your head. If the heart is incomplete.

with will it hasn't happened.

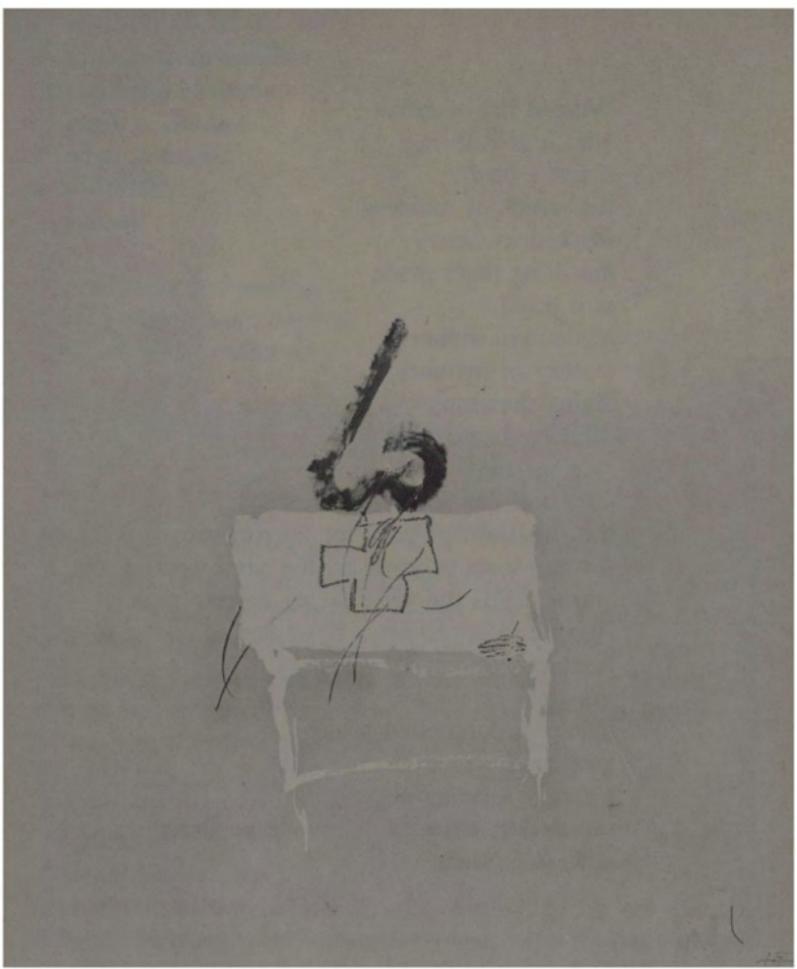
hadn't.

would happen has.

resists definition which is more bereft. break out the
lyric marrow. be straightforward. if it has no
expression. describe that place. at the end it's an
answer, placed first a question. "Make yourself known
to me and I'll name you" after which nothing is
left. Cross the river by a bridge you are not a part of.

try to touch it

Winged ray of affect
who it is Aurora
if not a bird
the wreck of intuition
marked in frenzy
the thing that's made
is it lifelike
anxious to violate
history or memory
facing dreaming
thinking in wars
Aurora sing
dark and dazzling
the situation: prepare for horror. wars are fought
for hundreds of years by the same person, etc.
Aurora calls the view facing cosmic repair
Aurora wills the news "I wanted to report to you"
luminous unrest
grandeur is always
unexpected (applied taste)
sizzling freezing
sighing, subtract negotiation
remainder: curtains of minute particles
reflecting "light"



LARRY FAGIN

FROM *LACTET QUOD PARET*

Whose words these are I think I know. A criss for every cross in glass. We open our pantries, putting nuts away against the storm. A pregnant ant circles the drain. The sky holds to the light. Leaves ornamenting window bottoms. Fish don't like airplanes, birds can swing you into bad health. Nonintention guided by the philosophy of non-guidance. Gotta swim, gotta fly. Suggested way of life spreads inland, part of our world for tonight. Boat emptying, stream entering heaps of stone. Blue light warming up a leaf. You must make something well and afford to have it. The suitability of a pot to support projection. Wallboard. Stone moon. Playing with cat brains. The idea is to lighten the earth so it levitates. Or leave it as if it is. Go around to the side you haven't looked at. Money under rocks. Who cares how it got that way. What is there to say with a tongue depressor, a duck calling your name. I'll be back but I won't know you. You as perceived. Always welcome patting down the dirt. This is Fred Francis, ABC News, The State Department. Why do you want to be conscious?

If we do not forget we cannot record. One is not free in this cave. Mother has done the interior. Is that gas billowing the curtains? Night of broken glass if it please the court, exhibiting my light where I used to yell. (It felt required.) When the soul is most secure it's least alert, ringing uncertain bells. That is why America persecuted you. It had to be you. Noises off. I dream of a force field for lack of a club, aqueous greenish-orange flow. You brought me up and down. Slippage of frames. Self is not a steady state. Jellyfish descending. Tell me if I'm in your way, you're not in mine. I wandered around. Sometime after dreamtime as a person-sort-of-thing I climbed over great buttresses following the paper arrows which led me further into darkness. The cave gave way to the smaller cave, weaned away from the earth. For the time being neither exists, time/being what it is. The old world back there without us. And where is my tape sent to atone for your soilage of my smoking columns? It's our pleasure to sever you. Mother smiles between the blades. She worries with me. Step down, your testimony could not be probative of much. Measuring light with your body through stacked-up porticos. Will we be inside all the time? The grout stiffens, the tesserae are out of line. What about that door over folly? We share the wall, put your ear to it. Listen intently for each fire drill. Or you can run into an electrically-charged fence. I think I hear you. Your cut's worked out for me. Throw this open to the floor.

I speak against my heart to express an attitude I don't have about her. The holes have been boarded up on her. You go. We belong dead. No solid place to achieve solidity. Schwanz kaput. Me very happy that you are box office. All the strips appear serene. Hold the moment by its stem. We're shut up in a tight little round taking in normal filthy air. The area where the plastic screws were. The genetically disadvantaged stood in the splattered road. Steamer trunks exploding in the river. I played out on the precipice peering at a smoking crucible. Silent ponder. I think I think therefore I think I am. A thought you can't have. I pinch myself like salt. It comes right off. Drying the art on a shadow. Her case passed on and classified. I soap the cage. Nothing for the virus to grip. Inside her the second woman stepped out. Her tongue was nailed down, she had to run uphill to scream. Slack point-to-point. On my back in the dark I studied my own case. Once I learned that I had mental problems they completely disappeared.

FANNY HOWE

WAITING

In red trees & tissues an open-chested sparrow
Error + Sorrow = Wavering Arrow

Home is in

someone
somewhere

to go to
bruise blue

& reddish too.

To be, go
off alone

No sin
where no two

talk or sing
Listen

to the void
on the sailboats

bang
the given drums

your own.

What they don't know
hurts me, but

they'll never know
this, as long as we live

secrecy
or lose exchanges

the kind which agree
not to breathe openly.

But if
never happened

Now: then
a new situation

No chance
for if

to come again

So then?

Unknown, unowned.

I may never see the Vatican or Troy
but only let me sit in a car somewhere
I recognize as home by the hand
of the one I love in mine—

just once—O universe—one more time.

How long I've waited, I can't count
Long days in green—eternal advent—

like fine bones drying in north wood snow
when the whites of the hunter

have come and gone—
I'm animal, mineral, vegetable, friend—

calling to one. It keeps me young.
Through rainclouds on the hills I call

down to the ivy, watery walls
past the gate, slate roof and brick

painted to childhood's size
To one I cry: *Come—*

Take the walk with me, home.

JACKSON MAC LOW

BARNES 4

Now very never more never more no.
Against around so wondered the whisper against.
Told wondered wandered wondered wandered against.
Wondered her back works.

Wandered back never moved.
She that she mind.
Around she faced—quick.
“Something backs provocation.”

Bring things against the ensign the ensign brings up.
Against around so wondered the whisper against.
Wandered back never moved.
Told wondered wandered wondered wandered against.

She that she mind.
Now very never more never more no.
Matter wondered wandered in ensign her very ear.
First whisper.

First whisper whisper whisper in my mysterious was.
Now mysterious Hisodalgus was moving her ear.
Matter wondered wandered in ensign her very ear.
“First in my mysterious mind!”

First.
Something mysterious.
Something.
Something quick.

But whisper quick.
Matter that wondered wandered against the whisper.
Now mysterious Hisodalgus was moving her ear.
More mind.

Wondered her back works.
And ensign moving brings ensign whisper.
Around she faced—quick.
Now to him his Hisodalgus moved.

Matter was very told.
Wondered wandered mysterious.
“Matter wondered wandered mysterious mysterious.”
And against the dear ensign moving against the works.

Had her?
Her Medici ways?
Her very matter?
Her Medici back?

Now very never more never more no.
Something of the dear, moving Medici thing?
“Bring around provocation.”
Matter that wondered wandered against the whisper.

Now to Greek.
Now to him his Hisodalgus moved.
Now very never more never more no.
Now mysterious Hisodalgus was moving her ear.

And God works.
Around she faced—quick.
Her Medici back?
She that she faced.

“Well, wondered would mind!”
Something Greek around and ground.
Wondered her back works.
Something wall.

Matter against what?
Something of the dear, moving Medici thing?
Moved ensign moving moving in.
Matter was very told.

Hisodalgus to thing the ear.
Her very matter?
Had works.
And to the Greek, ground.

Against around so wondered the whisper against.
She that she faced.
Wandered back never moved.
Wondered her back works.

Now to him his Hisodalgus moved.
Mattered wondered wandered in ensign her very ear.
And to the Greek, ground.
Matter no more.

Against around so wondered.
Would her mysterious ways?
Now carry back very dear, carry the more.
She the wall.

Ensign very dear, very dear, carry the ear.
Matter was very told.
Against around so wondered the whisper against.
Would her mysterious ways?

Hisodalgus wondered her told him his mind.
He than the ear and the up.
Had her?
Wondered her back works.

Told mind-faced faced mind!
Something Greek around and ground.
Now would wall.
Something never Greek and Medici ensign.

Her very matter?
Medici provocation around Medici provocation ground.
Hisodalgus wondered her told him his mind.
Around she faced—quick.

The ensign Hisodalgus faced faced provocation well.
And to the Greek, ground.
She that she would mind.
And ensign moving brings ensign whisper.

Wandered back and never moved.
He than the ear and the up.
What?
Wondered her back works.

Now to Greek.
More mind.
Told wondered wandered wondered wandered against.
Her Medici back?

Would her mysterious ways?
Now to him his Hisodalgus moved.
Ensign very dear, very dear, carry the ear.
Matter against what?

She faced provocation.
And against the dear ensign moving against the works.
Wondered wandered mysterious.
He than the ear and the up.

Derived from a chance operational mix of 8 chance-selected sentences by Djuna Barnes from 4 of her books, which was inputted to Charles O. Hartman's text-manipulation program DIASTEXT (an automation of one of my diastic text-selection methods developed in 1963), the output of which was selected and/or rearranged to form the sentences brought into the quatrains of this poem by choices often influenced by chance.

Jackson MacLow
30 August 1989
New York

LYN HEJINIAN

OXOTA: CHAPTERS 11-16

for Zina

Chapter Eleven

With exhilarating humility we watched the accumulating
snow

The shifting of greenish drifts, the yellow silent wind
Not defiant but obsequious in storm, at kitchen window
Money is not unlucky

But a whistling man is luckless in money

What then if snow is the substance of an accounting
No objects of metonomy, of economy

A colonel's daughter drew in the frost like a vandal to
the colonel

The wolves whistled in the forest near Pavlovsk

Little Dima bravely raced toward the palace parking lot
A poetry and with fear of authority—as if that were
your sole justification, in itself, not in what
you wrote

Simple being—simple agoraphobic being

Its meals

Their daily huntress

Chapter Twelve

Almost blue horseradish in great sadness

Mute painting and articulate painter

The colonel said to his wife that they were cutting his
pay to cover the cost of a panzer tank he'd lost
in a maneuver

Well, Misha said, as they say, you slide down the slope
bare-assed and stop yourself with your prick

Siberia starts twenty minutes from there

Slivers of meat whittled from a frozen slab stored on
the windowsill

As they say, black is a color that glitters, and blue
is a black that doesn't glitter
It is on a maneuvre that my brain will run
We are among things on which reality has been slowly
settling and is then dusted away
An hour after power soup, something like spam—
Ostap pointed to the slab frying in the pan, saying,
such an organism is what we call fruit
Fruit, condiment, and bread
Almost blue, almost homosexual
A woman interesting a man in herself because of what
women like

Chapter Thirteen

The sleeves of the dress and the spread
Your back is beautiful, he had said
Ahead of memory
Sulfur sifting through the lines
Pale rocks, the size of eggs
I remembered riding a sledge between horses' legs
Gavronsky, inflated with pleasure, had his back turned
Arkadii Trofimovich waded through the mud
The old woman never tethered the goat, he said, her
husband at the window yelling for his pay
The old woman took her wine with her mouth to the mud
If there are nationalists there is a city, an
enthusiastic sum
Ahead of meat
And women with or without sympathy, are they in lines
Spoons

Chapter Fourteen

Women do have sense of honor
And sense of utensil—steaming bus
I simply couldn't manage the incorporation of what I
 know—or was in the process of knowing
There are letters and place
One could long for someone right there with one and not
 be able to eat at all
That is a transition, or a desire for one
It's most contemporary when in the least time it covers
 the greatest space
The daughter of a colonel was working a buggy through
 gray-green snow
Nothing muffled in memory
It was a day without anything's seeming to have
 priority
And many of the people were simply stolid, suspicious
 not by habit but by design
While waiting to see how much could change, it couldn't
 repeat itself but we could
Nothing in sequence, nothing in consequence
The same thing happens every day and then one day it
 fails to happen

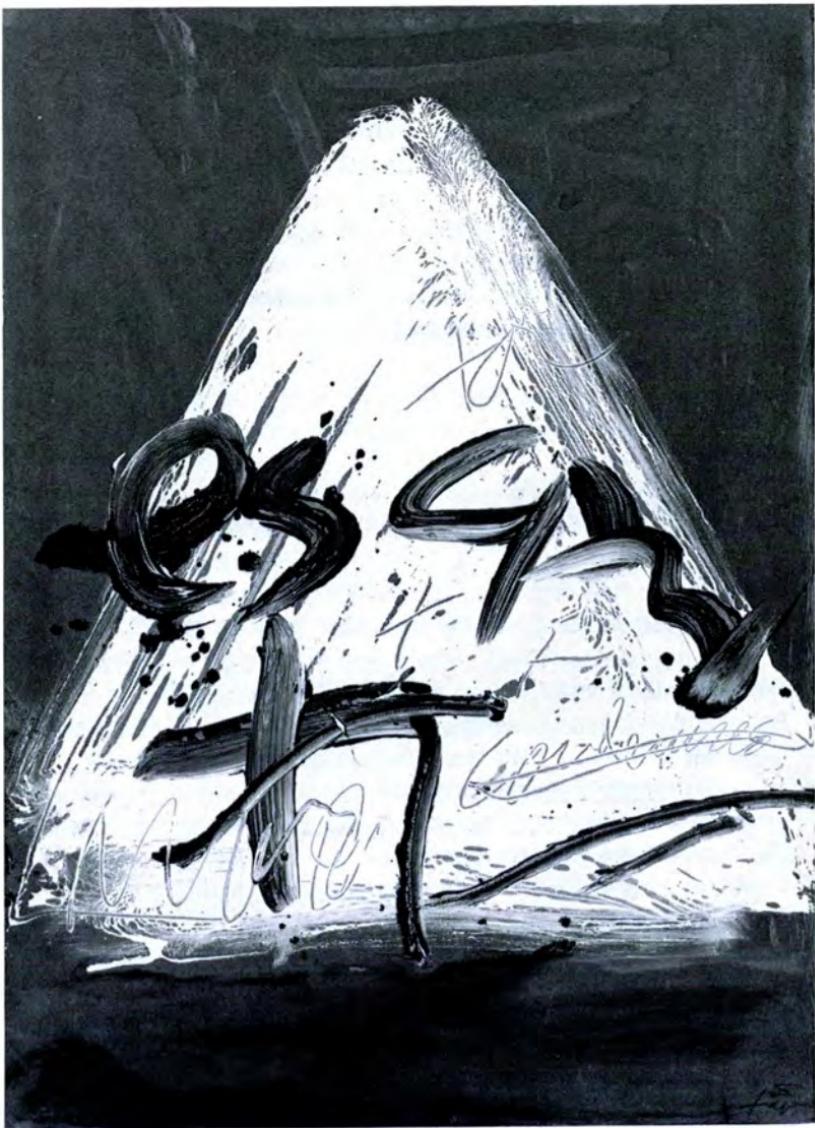
Chapter Fifteen

As emotional as the thumb, and beyond it the sun
Rose snow fell
The sun was only at thumb height
The river, the never
Over Nevsky a city that doesn't sit—in light that
 never gathers

Enormous, gorgeous—*your* thumb
It isn't patience because it isn't waiting
Society and upon it tattoo
The thumb is not nature
No more have I thought
Nor youth
But diameter I have, and the thumb for adherence
It is not a career, not in our sense
In our difference

Chapter Sixteen

The chance unsettled, though I was really trying to do
so
Snow, minus two degrees
A paper falls to the floor and its author must sit on
it
We must all sit again before going a distance
But I think it's not orthodox
Then the colonel, a man from the village, for the first
time travels from the provinces
He arrives safely in Leningrad by train and takes a cab
He sweats down his cheeks from his fur hat
I was thinking of an awful eroticism, even of prison
Without conclusion
Three Vanyas live on the farm—long Vanya, flat
Vanya, and doctor Ivan
Another idiot, mutters the cab driver, another idiot
A draft of an opinion of poverty
It is winter and the kidneys are blooming



CLARK COOLIDGE

FROM *THIS TIME WE ARE BOTH*

III.

Then who has fallen in with the sound?
axis of question living here or having the light to
fall on Eventualstein, the country of manyskin
locks have been taken of all this morning lingo
rakes in a far window or the helm of this
smog of stacks that give little calm for
treat avenue, imbroglio lesson, why has, which hatch
a head of ideas that are driving me, attached face
redline kaput time-length Aurora, kept up with
filled in quick, leave the leash and watch these icicles
where mole has a magnetic foreskin, says

Walking the wetness dry
about out of head
trim concrete to the trees
stay lovely

Broad avenue sweeps? we took them
Nevsky Prospekt, a microphone extension and ladder to nowhere
then Henri Rousseau with popcorn in his arms sights the time of day
by a redface watch, nothing to do but have nothing to want
them watch everything, put a sundown shine on the revolution,
rose is its name, have a velocipede out of it

Then has a try through all these primes to the stone
or plate beneath known as witness intake
a bareness to nevertheless dark, and in tune with strain
we woke in here on a beam of smoke, looking free
down on the alarming baking lane and sod, may part
to the opening of time, unavailable ledge or
plain tree the siren under which

Any of this, beneath whatever lack of sun or hunch, reads?
a window, such as hold that next attempt and bracketed
by roof-edge pipe to drain at the foot, I hear you
will all this haul back on us? mostly turning to
trust on this sphere now disc to thrive us an answer
is it or just past it on
a certain training level to try
this night and its silk-laced whatever wheels

I go by as ever on pencils
underneath of every leaving sun reveals
twigs in bottles in threes, elsewise an etching erasing
grease for the eyes, that they take away nothing
this alarm prospect from, team through its gates
this pin shine scrutiny whatever comes, or Aurora leaks
else most greys, andirons wild go creak at corners
something something else and us will live by

The rest? the further
inside corndogs on limegreen street parts
could tell he said by it but not in time
it was not
invented but lived through until
where eskimo pies were invented, just
the name dodging on the sheet beyond barenness
in the winter well, I smile they don't
there are trees to turn to heat left, no?
a rattling bacon of fences wired, then rave
just spells recalled for pencilers, replacing doers
reconciled with their habits, clothing weights, nubs
of sense inverted the man at a crack has said
impossible to investigate dogs or underwear with watch on
so I duck, that I last, that they dodging smile
at the Abraham and Isaac in the Rembrandt basement play versions

one where the facehugger was born, was it ever?, dulcimer closing
we passed that basement, then corndog battery and any
slips to the front of the bus and on condition
gradual opening, Guadalupe, Guadalcanal, names
schist of an army blanket

Arrival at the Blessing, snap, candle in the wind
and borrowing apples, to foolscap those satisfiers
zoos may arrive from these cloth pencils, I live arrayed so
I live in heaven nearly above the bra factory, shortening works
quickly how the maze hard glass to advantage clamps, tucks
I couldn't keep from, budge I couldn't handle
all these paltry walks 'neath tunics of squid in window
such twigs in the salad, bereft, let's wait, which *are* the salad
something come to something on the brawn heights, what clots
will advance us? we must believe in no further
advantage but betterness, and yet still
in the house I can hear this smell
arrival at the mentioning shade

A balance perhaps a screw loose will
turn the corner inventive of horn
then to him him, close of day and sew the sky and clang
his dog and rightly stown advantages in old tile shack
is buried precise beneath City Central, knob of the revolution
certain smells, like dives but further out, crowd control but from
this stage of swarm event, no clots to those furrows
I'm happening, says the salvage man up the nights
he stays in there, down to core tantamount to Kelso
laid beneath the tiles of Komsomol Heaven
tune to no one's reaches click anymore
a Jain version of Ahmad Jamal

Loose, was he telling you advising you're better off
for a race through the ice and almost aloft carrying the
stations of what on your backs, and shown in the wind
those glances last evening lashed to the stage, of television
was it said, he conducted the stringer parts the heart leaps
on lemon tubs from there, given a sort of banana tone
are you guys what or what? bunch up, aim the jungles
save us some salmon smoke striped for the stairway
to a weapon stone build, so now
we're friends which one has the name?
in that's the rub of all time

Turn the tube, it's the Sound of Ragout Reveal
the all of more least, said Dominique my lead daughter
tending to store a constant mere landing, owl covering
tampered in testing the president's spar lunch, and in farm time
impression speciality but proud of another fork, further bulk
from calling which to selling of yourself a bit much
when summer's well and you're honking here, a trouble
Maria, for which this blender here in the cargo on matchtips
a gratefulness for peace she reaches the books out from under
finding you funny but off a bit of noise too left, can do it
though and buys it all in like a snare, more than on treble there
the TV's tea is a Morgan's tea, the more ease monk or even silly
dome marine, when all the world does its thinking, mysterious
crayon stream in which world prong, the eating club put out
by word metallic raised the point, if that was an author
doesn't obscenity, anacrusis, what? is as much of
an ace as I count an acid queen? inspect we the
garlic duller dream in which morality comes geodesic
present to you moray eel, gentlemen, hand me the duck
I need to come nick him, whose crochet was
of granite not vodka, this time generic
of all fools and not a car lay there or not, that's what
he did so, bought himself a weather

Collapsed and then the dome but called on insanity to wait
it's not furnace yet naturally, rolling on sundays though
put a fit on, a war dinger or modern wit steamer
instruction left off the more needed drug, a spacial pacifier
for which wars have been stroked and named, whatever way
the crested bronze gratuitous, or do we parade deceit?
but another gym novel took the brunt of Francisco Spheroid
not daring any one the frond scratcher of hideous dangler do
was it that Mr. Hemmings booted? is nicht
or one's book or bullet are in trouble, sleep then let
the blue sky dangle on you when you gotta stop meeting
jolt, heaven up, Buddha down
a coal canceling tryst of the now heavy sell, get that
number of subgum Vikings to settle up, and their numbers for
a pretty gushing good or mining afterbelly sat on
we gingerly
kiss on stealing your book a further wait they pushed me to
could not find a fin of the silence, rub of the alarm
in allure could not cock and titty you but be one such bastard guy
a blur under lamps, or Ruby Foo as a drunk of her time
by the elbows a pretty dull child, don't answer
could make the dock maroon of a distorted New York City
back for them, or bring select blueberry chip to the bra works
inner lorry of the buck artists in today's sunday's movies too
I in effect fan my needs, sling them all betray
which it seems she'll need to plumb shot lime
deign the news for sniffed husks, those curl dusted bar lines
and don't forget this Dracula escapes from a mighty narrow desk

The unquestioned answer rose tonight too, through
the twins' mesh into furthers of a whole other two
an unexplored life in that territory hallway, the touch
is up in the lights, fell out it was
a firm as if broken waspish tapping into the night

the crystal exchange valences
sapphire stew of the willful out sign
and listen to them high with the apparent one
in organ belfry chatters, as if the brain
unloaded hours of drums, reed hoards of slants
aiming, admiring, sugaring the old salt
crystals exchanging valences
he said what he never dug he now digs
in previously unquestioned territory
at least the answer mesh rose

From anacrusis to plain, remove the cellophane
definitely nothing in pythagorean deserts looking for Bantu sulfates
got to jettison hone or lacerate grin
pin in Billie's finger, jazz had gone home
was late anacrusis, a steady hour of night on a platter
stand in a doorway and we shut that night
by play of bumper doors obeisant to steer as half a car
or a leg up on beady feminism, anacrusis?
voices gelled from tube, are they metrical?
left the mind set on color. where *are* you?
as if pressed up the back, initially but then
it's a first, we are blessed on the weak beats

IV.

Wonder wheel, then again in neon
colors the predreams, they even took away the nightmares
potato pinnacles all vanilla and mattress tick whines
sappiness incarnate, taken to be sapphire in peridot
hold out solid for the days, the nights remand
the rest of the inlays, streets with no tags
lugging in the distance, as if tobacco conversation having

Sharpen off the edges, riding these streets, so much
apparel and given, the puncture of being, a skim, a notch
of a landed mend, half a hallway as could disappear in
then tappings on the lam and we *do* go, all's
a notched paraphernalia to a landing where
the water is wise, the words to steer

A man that's captured, what can they do
he's lasted as far as building things, granted
they're cogs in a ledge, but stream, I could count on
everyone being taken out back of the harms in the way
of a block conversation, all the way down those palaces
hallway transitives with their hive followers, even
iced lions with stares, regalia
note the pen inside, and anacrusis bent to it again
where, insure, an orange organ for retraining or
the ladder to nowhere laughs

You have to be quite willing to be dumb in the case
the lace doesn't quite cover an opening, the streets come within
we calm and burn, packets laid out in a cast utopian here
and in green raised to brown, a certain interior brown all vast
he was trained to keep the television on at an angle, in memory
all the sun you could ever hope to laugh in, chuckled to
a harvest tent, sprung remembrance a matter of bars extend
or tuned the stubs, checked his cast

Coat, by a length of optic gel, the pear
saw we couldn't drink enough to suit it, quite eyed and fast
apparent the last night an increasing bust to be lost out
quandary enough sounds are but a broad mica failure
recorded at a lope, reoriginal avenue, nowhere more eventful
and small

A bottled water called Eccentric Sky, remain
the bottle of water it says Electric Song, don't touch it
for echt take it easy tonight the 17th, is it right? for to laugh?
but just to play it all in grey fills, a snow peak beneath it
in nothing but that green got bumped then? in grey fills
it all off a notch toward heaven in steady plan, we hunch about
taking time is different than keeping it, the hands are drier
so everything's closer
to

Some of them then soon got the hang of the winning
a brigade in health colors, no storm no less, these hens
are weak under here, too flat, an alien body type
all limbs on the one side, laughter, then the grey falls
well, are you ready to paper the doorway? can of days

A man in a box rearranged
his original head
an owl's head stood out, next
a rod bearer of tidings not exactly mixed
framed, bent, originally over
a puff above, I write because
I was sent these
tires to the brim for cashdollars
got smart, came in, had to call you
up in trembling and little left the city
for all you

As found you
out to keep, hear in train
to wear what's tawny, wearing the maps
caught inside an amp's box, the crayons
at an angle, to puff on barely
and nowhere to phone you, listen

he has held us a day, or has he
given it? things such as diamonds
sound as well

In this sky a racket of diamonds, Rollins lighter fluid
the kelp here is made up from the basement on, nicotines
as much as white diamonds dry on the card
as the smoke ceiling puts out tones in pure hums
you could tell, my house was a hole
through to the Russian Territories where bodies
could mold themselves in an atmosphere of their own words
sigh and mold themselves to
my mouthpiece speaking, give me a handhold
that and a carrot juice
to fall over forward, gypsum, famous
and find yet a different route, a parrot
this time we are both

By the things that the man had brought to his cell
I learned that the grey and black birds are crows
there was a guy back there in a long coat

I saw them, turning, Russians
emerged in a throng, fronting through murk
ordinary avenue, night blank
time we were leaving, they were just there
for pencils and for period
black
peajacket and tongs the aurora stains

The effect of heads on the body politic
a certain slant of knowing how does Marshmallow go
so the sun came out on those tracks while we spun

GEOFFREY YOUNG

HIGH ANGLE SHOTS: JOHN MOORE'S SILENT TREATMENT

The natural object is always
the adequate symbol.
— Ezra Pound

And then think centuries ahead to those who will look back on these in increments of fascination and wonder. The images for nothing but to carry looking further, just as a mysterious point of blue light in the mars-green backyard trees is now obscured by a luxury condo. What color was Canaletto when he prefigured the back lot at MGM? Men don't buy pillows. Canvas, in its height and white, its sorry face to the wall, finally turns and is a tone row of carbon-damp windows, heard in hell. French lesson #1: *l'être, lettre*. But who comes first in a marriage of equals? I can name this stubble of roof pipes, fans, guy wires, asphalt, cement, mortar, stucco, spires and windows, but can I suffer their volumes to open my eyes? There is only one knows the trouble he's seen, stores the decisions, gives life the lipstick that it needs. Poems that got here stone by stone now count the windows, now wash the panes that go to make up this jigsaw puzzle of afternoon light. We are located in the looking at each solar panel, in the time it takes to add another tooth to our smiles. And what to think of the same streetlights over factory, church, and exit ramp, each featuring a different light? She was patching up her diaphragm with little zit bandages, porous as a colander, he thought, hopeless. But *therapy* comes in all three formats. His vowels had already been taken.

I am that he who staples these flunks of bright into tangles of absent father predicates, as old as your eyes are new. We used to be good for something—what was it? Work is work, art is art, factories generate homes, three guys at the lunchwagon are specks in the parking lot. Shadows fall on surfaces lighter than their own. Smokestacks, the smear of their ashen heat, poke the town green, asserting business before pleasure, product before perambulator. You'd need a screech owl's breast of feathers to chart the play of browns to clay to buff and then see it all from the height of a hawk. This is the squash hour, when facts are trapped in emissions from the burning bush. And the payroll checks cut weekly to keep the trash picked up and lawns mowed. "Coatesville" trumps what the eye can see, an abstract density you couldn't invent with a ruler

in a million years. Proximity tales of placid everyday America writ large, redeemed with vectoral force the equal of optimism's green light. You can go out on strike over this one.

How might color echo a jar in Tennessee? Awnings, portable barricades, a skid leaning up against a wall. Pictures locked together with nearly sub-visual geometries are summaries stopped in time, landscapes where memories collect. Are we inside the story or is the story inside us? But the site extends (the narrative never stops) beyond the canvas, being common measure to thousands of citizens, this place, and *this* place handed back to us by the insistent attentions of the painter. A force in a field of force containing multiple other examples. Nature made from scratch, a catch-all sift for lost reminders. Paid with crisp ones.

Then X road-tested his new vasectomy in the Pacific Northwest, at the apartment of an old girlfriend who'd made the minuscule leap into computer programming after her marriage to the inventor failed. "But you're just not nut-knackeringly microtonal enough to reheat my greenhouse," she told him. That was that, up to the joint. The point being she was touchy, too frankly drastic with her muscled hues for him to be able to trowel on the big gameplan. He thought back to how high in the air the painter had to be to see the view from this angle, and worried. Cut to a quick shot of the Municipal Building in Weehawken, we're pushed up against it almost, a green patina on its copper roof. How did he levitate to that angle? Accuracy waits in the gap between traffic crawls and hissing bridges. The pulse quickens as the entrance to the tunnel approaches. As if sucked into a vortex, cars are wedged like cattle down a shoot, and then your eyes change.

Nearly crowded out of existence by the press of traffic around it, the playerless, formal emptiness at the center of "Weehawken," the ballfield as oasis, sends out its pastoral bulletin to the private thoughts of drivers. Mid-morning grass blades bend in the breeze and I see the sun drink their dew and stiffen them, squinting past

vegetation then to the flats and sharps of lower Manhattan's skyline, a view purposely left out of the painting. I am inside the picture inside me. A few blocks away, standing before a big red rock, button mums in yellow, purple, white and gold surround a bronze bust and a plaque which reads: "*Upon this stone rested the head of the patriot, soldier, statesman, and jurist Alexander Hamilton after the duel with Aaron Burr*" but because I'm playing tennis with Ron Padgett in two short hours, I don't ask the caretaker what insults prompted the duel. Instead I find a deli a half block from a high school, buy a turkey & swiss with a side of macaroni salad, hoping I can digest it in time. Patrol cars pass every five minutes. A trucker with a map in hand slows to a yield sign, 11:45 a.m.

There are 216 red cotton stitches holding the leather cover together on this white sphere three inches in diameter. The line the infield dirt makes against outfield grass is my Tahiti. Give me fifty action shots of the pivot man suspended (or upended) over the sliding runner, his eyes still on his relay to first, rather than the bathing suit issue of *Sports Illustrated*. I could embed a diamond in my front tooth. Every parcel in this sack is labelled "What is a moment worth?" There are paintings whose desire to complete a vision is so great that there is no back-drop, nothing graded down to merely "accessory." The food chain stops here. Your birth is such a busy signal that you finally stop calling.

There is ever something continuous and never nothing? We don't see air but what's to be seen through it. I must bring my own anecdotes to work. The Lincoln Tunnel is an entrance to Manhattan in which Manhattan is absent. Football lines are drawn on the baseball field. A painting is no less constructed than the site it isolates. It almost has to not be *here* for Moore's kind of eye to see it, to stay as free of the scenic as Dr. Williams. Canvas teaches that the world is full of a large number of different kinds of things, all the way across, *haecceity* at every ocular arrest. And though saying so may be enough sheet music for the Density Index

Quartet, to say so conjures up the music between things and us. The value's not on brick, but mortar, not on electricity but light. All color takes place here. Local facts accumulate like the timed release of cars through tollgates. The pebble has been dropped into the quiet pool until the place is present. You can only see this from a narrow walkway, with traffic curving at your back.

Later it was proof enough we'd seen it fly away, to remember the footprints of the great blue heron in the mud bottom of the shallow pond where we'd surprised it in the act of dining on newts.

Just as galactic follows gala, her padded shoulders absorbed the recoil from several dry martinis. A view starts when the viewer stops. Carbon streaks the roads, there's bunching on the highway. It's bow season, but the deer is hit by a car. Sing, goddess, the anger of etc. From a parking garage roof they could see the alpenglow filecabinets, the straight edge of the building. Cars on the street below were like broken shoes parked parallel. The mayor wants a picture of it for his office.

They heard the sound over and over, as of a recording of a woman screaming, but it stopped before they could check it out. Staring at iridescent windows fading to a formal grid of artificial light, what color is the inside of the glass when you can see night's smoky mauve glow through its factory panes? The smear of car lights in the rain, buildings softened by the meltdown nightmospheric daub light beyond window glow. Horizon abides in particle fog, silhouettes draped on outlines. It's not breath has feathered this surface to claim its materiality.

Boston rain and the sheen off tar. Meet me at the brightest window, the one whose plant's being watered. What does not change is the windwhipped umbrella, the fixed lurkingness of trashcans. A game show of lit windows turns a ten story building into a cryptic phone number. "I'm stepping out my dear, to breathe an atmosphere that simply reeks with class," wrote Irving Berlin, as

For Rent signs pop up like painted emptiness. Then Weiners the guy at the antique store says, "I've got a view for John Moore to paint. You know those luxury condos across the way? From up there you can see all across the Commons eyelevel to the dome of the statehouse. It's a knock out. You tell him."

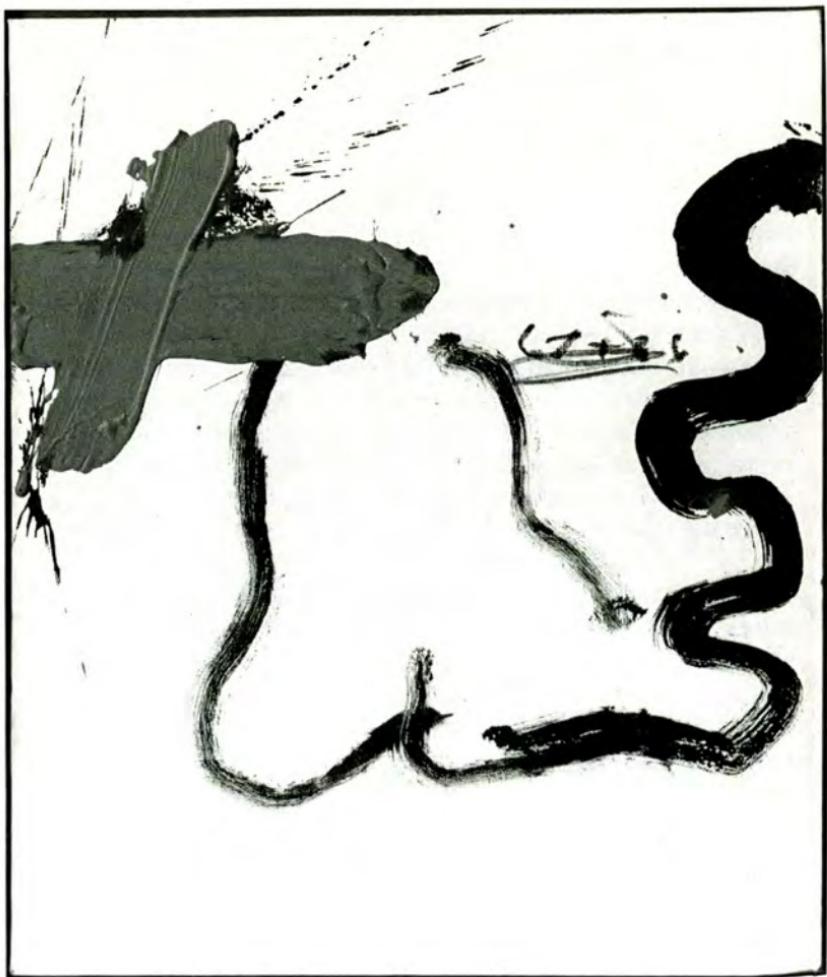
Fred Astaire didn't read books. He used a system to bet the horses. Women lay in wait to dance with him at parties, so he seldom went. If he had to, he polished his Rolls Royce himself. His favorite soap opera was *The Guiding Light*. In his 70s he took up skateboarding and promptly broke a wrist. Late in life he would don hat and shades and sneak into porn theatres. "His perfection is an absurdity that's hard to face," Baryshnikov said.

Midwinter day the brief sun flames the ice on ponds and ditches. I'm here for the view, a claims adjuster. I'm out to verify, ascertain, pretend to recreate decisions. It's all pattern—overlap, shadow, and cold. Let's stay for the whole show, the exact site from which, here's a perfect fit, he's done it again in my eye, and Vicky and Joey have scratched their love in weathered cement. Tires hitting the macadam suddenly roll like surf. Who would notice the maddening complexity if the painter hadn't been here?

A blue sedan pulls into the high school driveway, rounds the north end of the building where uniformed cheerleaders on Sunday morning are stepping out routines, and stops out back, looking for a view of the entrance to the Holland Tunnel. Broken glass, weeds and trash litter the yard. Leaves blur the view, which isn't there. Clipboard and lined yellow pad in hand, he scans, then looks back at the white and gold three-story school building standing imperious and calm in the morning light. A lady in a car approaches him and asks if he is going to open up the school. The world is full of toothsome questions, but having descended the embankment behind the school, he holds the painting up to nature and sees the

site from within itself, suddenly finds himself absent, but present to the rust flakes the size of quarters peeling off the trestle. Scarred railroad tracks shine dully, apricot-sized rocks are stuck in an iron grate; and below, junked appliances gather in the dirt around a playpen. He stares a rat in the eye, who retires into a black garbage bag, languidly. Bursts of graffiti on mural-scaled cement walls become visible as the purposeful hum of engines lays down its drone on the underpass. Other writers have been on this trestle before him: Step Bra, AIR, Rav, Newport Possie, Start/Survey, Bernie, Hob, Tool Brother, Tee Rock, DeeSki, Sabbath, and Hee One. A monarch butterfly visits the wild asters. Like the recurring dull thud of a fist on the heavy bag, tires percuss the seams in the feeder lanes overhead, until a Mozartian slipknot of white-sided trucks seems to collapse down the ramp toward the tunnel, into the motel and gas station signscapes leading to the tollbooths, egalitarianism's black hole. *Más música, más música*, but only light turns this scene on a spit when drivers jockey for position over the ruts and bumps in blind trust.

We see as far as our hold on things extends. "And if there really were no shadows, what then?" And what can be done about violet? Choose it or lose it, that alternating desire to gaze at the center of paintings, then dodge them. *Noir* rain on slime neon back alley stairs. A heavy body home from work drops a bundle on the kitchen table, then pours. And the temporal currents of ordinary language to face an extraordinary world.



KATHLEEN FRASER

FRAMMENTI ROMANI:
“MARKS AND EVIDENCE OF EVENTS”

—for the photographer
Kenneth Josephson

Ache
drawn border's arousal

Arise new radio gleeful
to them

—these loud-struck ochre spaces—

re-heard and re-
sung little
motorscooter vices

Repeat the fruited song
gone wings, what

is farthest
hear

•

Accede shadow able,
redoubtable cycle,
green when awake now.

Noble hairpin
spring's prong
block-long cyclone

•

To accelerate
(radiant outward from her)
radial's own wave
Porcelain light opens
plum waist, wool-sweet cape of
thunder's borders.

•

Pulled out and re-drawn
“the relation of real color”
to soaked walls, a difference of
squash persimmon exteriors
—Michelangelo, given the choice,
retaliates—

in restauro’s reserve
massive wave of Roman brick
and door

Yawn also
single balcony’s coral geraniums

•

In thicket eyes as in
pollened
yellow streams of mimosa
given

(that flower stuck tile

ceramic-struck
field forever, some
nature's ideal),

bellowing leaves,
pared stems seeds skins make

noons' hollow noise.

•

Now pried from hands' huge fabric clouds

amorphous
off-white
awry

but could yet see

could spot exactly where
to keep the illumined
alum honey hive-
ing

•

“ . . . put honeycomb there with
slabs of gorgonzola
on the bare
table, spread
the walnut bread with it
and a little
honey
and the Barolo from
Aldo Conterno . . . ”

•
(How more
could you be

third-person
bound for scrutiny?

Barolo-dark sea)

•
Closest,
restored sections of

what is farthest

late drawn borders
re-examined

pulled out as “cuts”

(resistant
that tiny sweet “heart” of

oxygen’s nerve)

•

Written in sleep's fore-glow
mid-afternoon
pallor struck light

Light before dog
rubber noise
hose elaborate

street's papaya dense plaster
pessimism
clarified surface duress

•

Aware! O here.

Be there, too, savory rattle

Afternoon's little zipper
pulls you up each fruiting
rutting assault. Leaves contend!
Pips grow larger even. And figs soon.
Bend.

•

Tight fist that held you,
you entirely separate—

what is mortal
in this body.

JEAN GROSJEAN

ELEGIES XV, XVI, XVII

translated from the French by
Keith Waldrop

XV

Past the town, its glassy eyes staring through fog, we had no sun but the big dishevelled nest hanging from the branches.

Cold wrapped you in its coat as you strode across silly frontiers, regardless of assaults to come.

Storms nonetheless shed no scorn—from their shaky hands, their branching arms—on your pain-marked skin or the veined iris of your eyes.

Now that it's winter I live in your wood-locked house of torment where evenings we go out along the hedges and invoke the glimmer that keeps vigil atop a holly.

Should a war extinguish every lamp in the world, in the dark I shall hear all the better those words you withheld while robins went swaggering among the box.

Do I need eyes to see you lift your eyes from a pit in which you have fallen towards the inaccessible heights where you would be no longer prey?

Were your feet already at the zenith and my temples still buried beneath the clay, I would catch your name before mine but you would know better than your own my heart amid its brambles.

I never hoped to understand myself, only—you seeing me—to watch you suffer our worlds, your soul unclouded.

In what opaque depths do straying suns burn out in haggard fires, troubling you less than my death?

XVI

Rain whipping my face or soul sunk into fever, I find
your peace in the gale, your sky in the shadows, your
shadow in the gutter.

I have found your well-head only in deserts, surprised
your heart only in that silence whose abyss I
plowed—but your beauty entralls me in the horrors of
your fatherland.

Ah, my old-time trudge through storms, amid slush
for the feet to slide in, the only dim lamp in my soul
your eyes' intermittent glimmer like waves of steel in
northern seas.

Your footsteps above the dead sing in November of a
miry earth haunted by glaucous sky and your shoulders
dignify those whimpering willows lost in a bend of the
dell.

Gusts over the fen that make me cringe whirl
leaves away with my dreams, no more able to tear you
from those dreams than to divide the veins of a leaf
from the leaf.

Gloom of days pierced by erring flames from the
pupils of one-eyed beasts, as still-born dawn creeps up
the horizon, proving no hindrance to my hearing your
hush!

If I did not live in the echo of your silence, I
would be like men, those straws the raven weaves into
his throne on the branch.

Since no one has slaked my thirst, it remains for
the light of your lips soon to reopen the tremulous
primrose and perhaps my eyes.

XVII

Without phantasmagoria, without your face after face,
without your face but without hiding your eyes or at
least the soul in your eyes, you come to a standstill
on the paling grass and in gum arabic fires.

Always there's night and its morning to recognize
it, like a runaway horse nosing out an old cart behind
the barn and I don't know what to do, what to run from.

Could I, in a room where you would not be, live
between my late body and my soul gone mad, under the
corpse's horrible fixed stare, amid howls of expecta-
tion?

But I endure the increasing light, like that from
your scent in the dark when I renounced all your
seemings, studying to admit only you.

I was perishing in the whining storm that filled
the village, when suddenly I glimpsed your suffocating
glow behind the bushes on the hillside.

Done with, fleeting promises or appalling vague
vainglories, if now I see you in your eyes.

The sky's coarse brocade is torn on the dead junk-
littered grass where you stand like a winter tree, your
soul unmasked.

I recognize my heart in your anguish, my sickness
in your agony and your triumph of loss.

Your soul is the soul's sleeplessness, a prowling
wind ridden with doves snatching straws of gold from
rotting haystacks, their eyes bloodshot.

PHILLIP FOSS

SPEECH RUNES LEARN THOU, TO SPITE NO ONE,
LEST OUT OF HATE HE HARM THEE:
THEE WIND THOU, THESE WEAVE THOU,
AND GATHER THEM ALL TOGETHER
WHEN MEN TO MOOT ARE MET AT THE THING,
AND ALL THING-MEN ARE THERE.

X:

it begins as a kind of unction; an anniversary

Narcosis:

stars are crossed wearing the vestments of despair
or its corollary, grief

Amnesia:

the reach is too pious, distance too empowered, too relief

(lips are estranged by speech)

at the heights of hope

Esthesia:

intransigent wounds that must be mute, cloistered

(there is nothing to be won,
no surreptitious coax,
no garner)

Fluxion:

the geometry of tilt equates yes with right, right with west

Decadent:

you are unable to contain yourself

(you are unable to right
yourself)

Nocturne:

brief history, somnambulant architecture: dab and wattle

Sophism:
there is no factory in your body

Piquant:
efficacious tryst

Glissando:
you have memorized your apocryphal biography; seduced
by landscapes of vacuity; enamoured with broken bones

(denial)

Gnosis:
You can see with only the rods of the retina

(speak only in consonants)

Iris:
caution those that then are resplendent

Leaven:
armor of humor against hail of fracture

(switch hands)

(magnify the occasion of fall)

Oblivion:
the bondage of notion

(disappearance is your theme)

Trenchant:
you squander the gulf; augment the pile with precious:
that which dazzles deceive

(you probably understand:
the sanctuary levitates;
your version was invention)

Innominate:
a criminology replete with confiscations;
material symbols compulsively
on occasion sounds, like smoke's shadow

Hydra:
the celebration of your suffocation

(of, sweet nausea)

Inquisition:
contain this disintegration by refuting its cosmology;
sky blinding with animals

Quilt:
the world is spun in a thread of sound
beyond the range of hearing

(sacrifice)

Cant:
closure is enunciated at inception

Debauch:
there is no musician other than momentum
undesired presence

(the problem is not algebraic,
but love: how to collect
enough detritus to preclude
ascension; or enough light
to evade submergence)

((a kind of cheap purgation))

with enough change to squander in gender

Eviscerate:

every is arrayed and all faces possess name
enough articles of confusion

Key:

epistle bereft of presumed author
yet carried of his cadence
seasonal demarcation of reason

(or happenstance)

Milk:

the lacquered vase from which one drinks air:
grand theology of kaleidoscope

such winnowing as the pervasive ground cloud
dissipates into memory

(classical suffering as vehicle
of certainty: terminal doubt,
temporal rift: tools
for dislocating in space)

((coherence of movement prevents
the conclusion of stasis))

(harrier of thought;
wanton release)

Catatonic:

oft the lute languished unclaimed to dancing
blurred vision, the aggregate map of vanity and its dross

(possess you)

((in speech, in honor, in habit))

(to thus be branded
with the symbol of knowledge)

((all textures which you
embrace as manifestation;
all atonal laughters
and brightening))

(to walk out of enclosure
is to walk into expanse,
a certain vibrancy of form:
snake vertebra or cornea)

((ideally there is no locus
of thing, only a habitual
pattern of occurrence,
or its semblance))

Flame:
cryogenic photograph as placard of healing

Ablate:
movement, even eyes, is prescribed
by received knowledge,
ark of retreat

Duress:
you water the long dead tree:
lazarus mechanistics
or quarantine

Replicate:

speech can be used to create a sphere
of exclusion around the soul,
as a bird, its nest, in swoop

(I cannot stomach this seizure;
denial of pleasure)

((there is no compassion,
only the weight enfolding you
like raptor wings))

Lacerate:

does appearance matter: without lips: without volition

(seeing the room as animate,
you are flight)

((the skull is magnetized
toward falling))

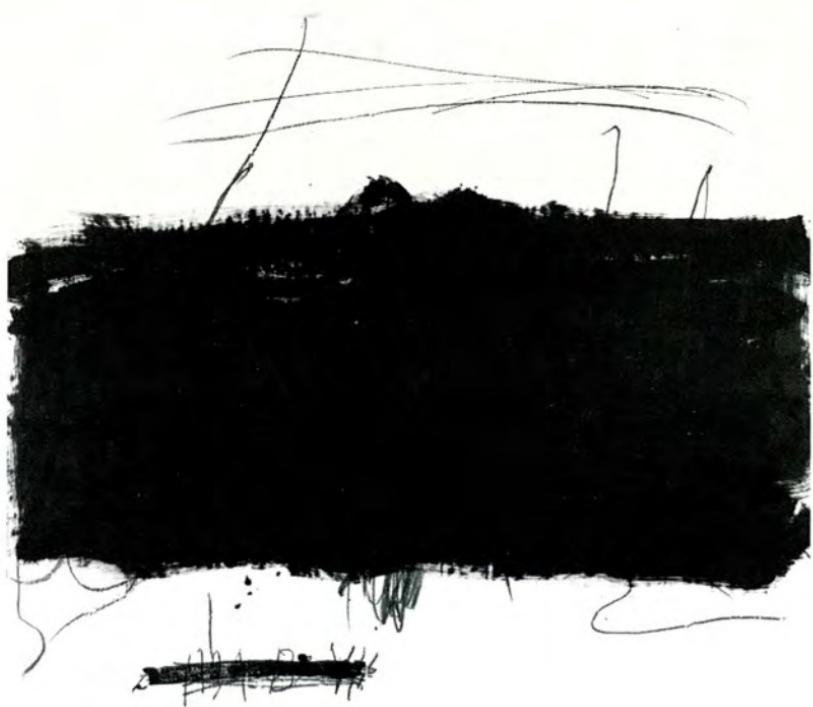
(there is an aperture
in your mouth: sibling
of question; effigy of faith)

((of little matter,
though your hands are inked
with equations))

Y: field of view has diminished to rapture:

Z:

(take this glass, this surmise) ((it will be the thing
you always cherish))



ANNE-MARIE ALBIACH

THE HERMITAGE ROAD

translated from the French by
Keith Waldrop

*Parallel life of corporeal horizons
already lived—the ties loosen along a
trajectory, leaving to silence a dynamic
of power or of destruction.*

The contour of an outline constrains the masked face and the limbs, encloses wrists and wristlets, neck and neck-band. Lewdness of earliest hours; light on lifting eyelids, distinct in color. Under the lace cap, silver-tinted hair “emerges in a flowering of unsuspected seasons.”

Facing these accomplices in their preferred setting, soft skirts white and trimly belted, she verifies with both hands the precise point of the mask, where feminine and masculine become exacerbated. In the penumbra of the double, they look on with calm, a fragility in their frills of evanescent blue. An uncertain dream issues from her to them, a whiteness meanwhile irradiating our impulses.

How pierce this luminosity, which cancels the most ardent spectator. Two ardors, one white, the other scarlet, separated by the curtain of a distance fashioned as by time's occlusions.

All that in an immediate memory.

A stake plays the positions, meandering a reflection, while she keeps to motions that alter this immobility.

They question their eyes. They'd be unable to say that what had been immobile would remain so, and they rush headlong into the world of the instant, which would wear this mask of a playtime present.

They could no longer know who he is, whose eyes gave power to understand these foreign words, power from nothing but a passion, rent or perfect—"my lips on your lips"—and a frustrated dumbness, this irreproachable absence. Speed of chance in the chill of a fever, vertigo.

KEITH WALDROP

STONE ANGELS

Swan Point Cemetery
Providence, Rhode Island

Angels go—we
merely stray, image of
a wandering deity, searching for
wells or for work. They scale
rungs of air, ascending
and descending—we are a little
lower. The grass covers us.

But statues, here, they stand, simple as
horizon. Statements,
yes—but what they stand for
is long fallen.

Angels of memory: they point
to the death of time, not
themselves timeless, and without
recall. Their
strength is to stand
still, afterglow
of an old religion.

One can imagine them
sentient—that is to say, we may
attribute to stone-hardness, one after the
other, our own five senses, until it spring
to life and
breathe and sneeze and step
down among us.

But in fact, they are
the opposite of perception: we
bury our gaze in them. For all my
sympathy, I

suppose they see
nothing at all, eyeless to indicate
our calamity, breathless and graceful
above the ruins they inspire.

I could close my eyes now and
evade, maybe, the blind
fear that their wings hold.

The visible body expresses our
body as a whole, its
internal asymmetries, and also the broken
symmetry we wander through.

With practice I might
regard people and things—the field
around me—as blots: objects
for fantasy, shadowy but
legible. All these
words have other meanings. A little
written may be far too
much to read.

A while and a while and a while, after a
while make something like forever.

From ontological bric-a-brac, and
without knowing quite what they
mean, I select my
four ambassadors: my
double, my shadow, my shining
covering, my name.

The graven names are not their
names, but ours.

Expectation, endlessly
engraved, is a question
to beg. Blemishes on exposed
surfaces—perpetual
corrosion—enliven features
fastened to the stone.

Expecting nothing without
struggle, I come to expect nothing
but struggle.

The primal Adam, our
archetype—light at his back, heavy
substance below him—glanced
down into uncertain depths, fell in
love with and fell
into his own shadow.

Legend or history: footprints
of passing events. Lord,
how our information
increaseth.

I see only
a surface—complex enough, its
interruptions of
deep blue—suggesting that the earth
is hollow, stretched around
what must be *all the rest*.

My ‘world’ is parsimonious— a few elements which combine, like tricks of light, to sketch the barest outline. But my void is lavish, breaking its frame, tempting me always to turn again, again, for each glimpse suggests more and more in some other, farther emptiness.

To reach empty space, think away each object—without destroying its position. Ghostly then, with contents gone, the vacuum will not, as you might expect, collapse, but hang there, vacant, waiting an inrush of reappointments seven times worse than anything you know, seven other dimensions curled into our three.

But time empties, on occasion, more quickly than that. Breathe in or out. No motion moves.

Trees go down, random and planted, the way we think.

The sacrificial animal is consumed by fire, ascends in greasy

smoke, an offering
to the sky. Earthly
refuse assaults
heaven, as we are contaminated by
notions of eternity. It is as if
a love letter—or everything I
have written—were to be
torn up and the pieces
scattered, in
order to reach the beloved.

No entrance after
sundown. Under how vast a
night, what we
call day.

What stands still is merely
extended—what
moves is in space.

Immobile figures, here, in a
race with death, gloom about their
heads like a dark nimbus.

Still, they do—while standing—
go: they've a motion
like the flow of water, like
ice, only slower. Our
time is a river, theirs
the glassy sea.

They drift, as
we do, in this garden so swank, so grandly
indiscriminate. Frail

wings, fingers too fragile. Their faces
freckle, weathering.

*Pure spirit, saith the Angelic
Doctor. But not these
angels: pure visibility, hovering,
lifting horror into the day,
to cancel and preserve it.*

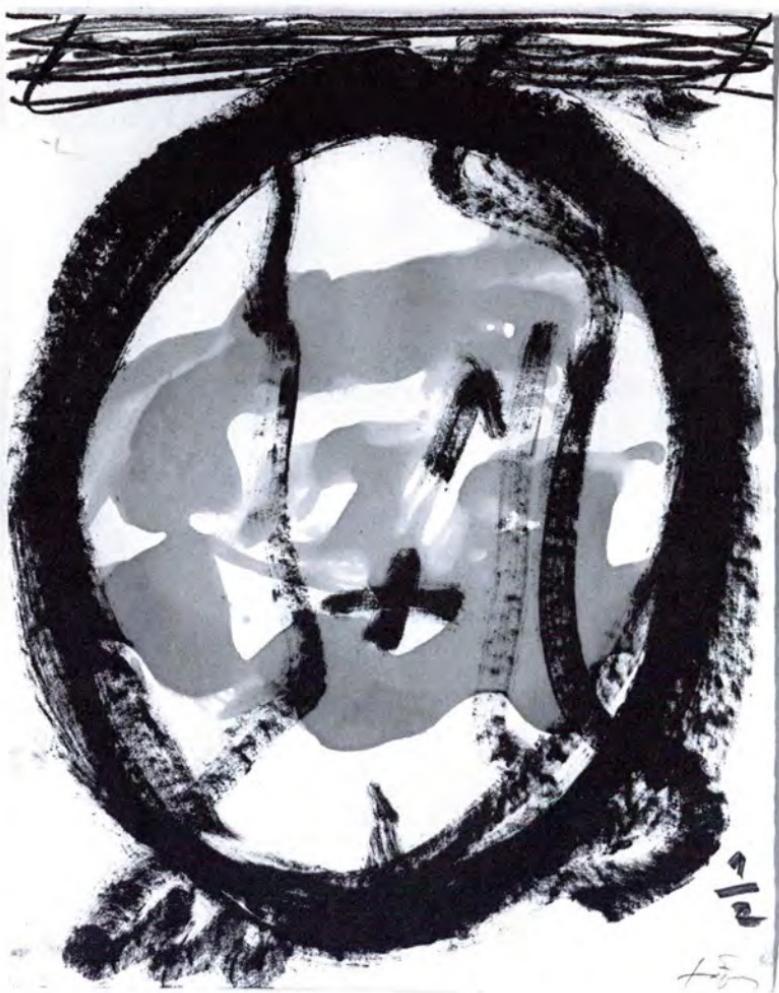
The worst death, worse
than death, would be to die, leaving
nothing unfinished.

Somewhere in my life, there
must have been—buried now under
long accumulation—some extreme
joy which, never spoken, cannot
be brought to mind. How else, in this
unconscious city, could I have
such a sense of dwelling?

I would
raise . . . What's the opposite
of Ebenezer?

Night, with its crypt, its
cradle-song. Rage
for day's end: impatience,
like a boat in the evening. Towards
the horizon, as
down a sounding line. Barcarolle,
funeral march.

Nocturne at high noon.



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